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THE Journal for all interested in

Country Life and Country Pursuits

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
Our Portrait Illustration: Lady Grizel Hamilton	325, 326
Russia and Great Britain	326
Country Notes... ..	327
The Blacksmith's Shop. (Illustrated)	329
Wild Country Life	331
From the Farms. (Illustrated)	332
Yachting: The Decay of Class Racing. (Illustrated)	333
The Beginnings of Angling. (Illustrated)	334
The Westerham Hill Stud. (Illustrated)	337
Mr. Tegetmeier on Pheasants	340
Country Home: Leigh Place. (Illustrated)	342
In the Garden at Holkham. (Illustrated)	346
The World of Heart's Desire	346
The Days of Pews. (Illustrated)	348
in the Garden	350
A Book of the Week	351
O'er Field and Furrow. (Illustrated)	352
A Tale of the East	353
Lord Rothschild's Year. (Illustrated)	354
On the Green	355
Two Hockey Matches. (Illustrated)	356
Mrs. Jackson's Perversion	358
Correspondence	359

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RUSSIA AND . . .
. . . GREAT BRITAIN.

IT would ill become Englishmen to grumble because of the ill-feeling towards this country which is so keenly felt in the dominions of the Czar and so rudely expressed in Russian newspapers. When we entered into an alliance with Japan our part was taken in the Far Eastern quarrel, and it would be unreasonable to expect that Russia would look upon that treaty in a benevolent light. But there is a great difference between a mere feeling of hostility and actual conflict. Under ordinary circumstances it would be enough to measure the advantages and disadvantages of a struggle between the two, in order to judge of the possibility of its occurrence. This country has no object to gain in fomenting a struggle with any of the European nations at the present moment. Our best policy, so long as it is not rendered necessary to resist aggression, is a peaceful one. Both by interest and inclination the British nation is in favour of tranquillity. Besides, at the moment we are still to some extent suffering from the outlay necessitated by the war in South Africa, and a greater and more expensive struggle is not in any sense desirable. Russia, on the other hand, has her hands full just now. It will require all her energy, all the ability of her soldiers and sailors, to emerge from the contest with Japan undamaged. Her finances, it is well known, are in no

prosperous condition, and the initial events of the war have proved beyond question that she was entirely unprepared for military operations on a great scale. Russia's best policy, provided the country was under the guidance of wise and prudent statesmen, would be to develop the immense territory now in her possession, and, by the encouragement of agriculture and commerce, to make the most of its resources and enrich the population. So much is perfectly self-evident; but the best seldom is done in this world, and there is not much chance of Russia receiving sound guidance on this occasion.

The conditions of Russia are such as to illustrate, in the most vivid manner imaginable, the evils of having absolute government under modern conditions. The danger to Europe lies in the fact that the Emperor of Russia can follow what course he pleases. Against him personally there is little to be said. He has so far proved himself an amiable Sovereign, inspired with kindly and high ideals, but his warmest admirers would not claim for him that he is a strong man; and the consequence is that, as has happened often before in the history of absolute monarchies, his Ministers have become mere cyphers, and the policy of the country is in the hands of a number of favourites who have gained the ear of the Czar. The people themselves have nothing to say in the matter. They represent a great inert mass who are extremely little interested in the trend of foreign politics. Their intelligence has not been quickened by popular government, and they seem to know nothing and care nothing even about the war with Japan. Now the favourites of the Czar are not broad-minded men who can take a moderate and just view of the situation. They are unable, or they pretend to be unable, to see that defence, not defiance, was the principle on which England went in forming the alliance with Japan. They forget that we have held a restraining hand over our ally, but for which war would have broken out quite six months earlier than it did, when the Muscovite army and navy were in a state of still more abject unpreparedness than they are at present. On the contrary, they represent Great Britain as the false and treacherous friend of Russia, who, keeping out of the fight herself, has egged on the Japanese to the encounter. Thus, among the people of most influence in directing the policy of Russia there is a growing animosity towards Great Britain, which at any time may find most disastrous expression. A correspondent from Moscow contributed to one of our contemporaries the other day a most searching and able analysis of the situation, in which he says that to rely on Russia's good sense or enlightened self-interest at the present moment is to lean on a broken reed. He describes the men who have peace and war in their hands as a group of irresponsibles, "whose influence upon the Czar is unbounded, and not one of whom is a Minister." It follows that "a correct attitude, therefore, and trust in Russia's appreciation of her conscientiousness in observing the laws of strict neutrality, is of little account."

The same correspondent had previously compared Russia to "a motor-car running at full speed through the crowded thoroughfares of a great city with no one in charge." It is a dangerous position for Europe at the present moment, though we can scarcely believe that it will lead to actual warfare. All that we know of the struggle with Japan goes to show that the resources of Russia will be strained to their utmost before it can be brought to a conclusion. The means of further warfare are not in the possession of the Czar at the present moment. In fact, the country appears to be so hopelessly disorganised that, unless it should rally under misfortune, only one issue of the conflict appears to be possible. The mere fact that it was undertaken shows that the Russians must have been thoroughly misled and misinformed. If it were not so, they would have known that after they ousted the Japanese from Port Arthur nine years ago, their yellow enemies have never lost sight of the fact that it devolved upon them to prepare a fleet and an army that would give them revenge for a retreat so ignominious. The interval has been spent in preparing for the war now in progress, and Russian generals and statesmen ought to have kept themselves fully informed as to what was going on. It argues a cynical immorality that they took possession of the very port from which they evicted the Japanese, and that promise after promise has been made as to their evacuation of Manchuria and no attempt been made to keep them. Great nations and great statesmen do not condescend to these measures, and the course of events argues a misgovernment in Russia from which all we can do is to hope that dire events will not spring.

Our Portrait Illustration.

OUR frontispiece this week is a portrait of Lady Grizel Hamilton, daughter of the Earl and Countess of Dundonald, who was married at Westminster Abbey on Tuesday last. The bridegroom is the Master of Belhaven, the eldest son of Lord Belhaven and Stenton.



THERE is always a certain pathos in the announcement that one who has filled a great place in public estimation for a long time is compelled through the lapse of years to retire from active service. It is aroused to more than a common degree by the announcement made by Sir William Harcourt that he will not seek re-election for the next Parliament. Sir William has been a great and a strenuous figure in politics for a longer time than even the middle-aged among us can remember. Always a stirring strong man, he has been a champion for his friends, and interesting to his opponents, but it would be a very selfish regret that denied him rest at the end of his long day's work. He has earned it in every possible way, and we trust that the evening of his life will be long and tranquil and happy. All the same, any House of Commons will be much poorer for his absence, and a good deal can be said for the contention that during the last few decades the class of man who goes in for political life has not been quite so high as it used to be. In fact, the House of Commons has shown some signs of deterioration, and we trust that the vacant place now made will encourage some of the more promising young men of the day to develop the great ambition that distinguished the youth of that time when Sir William Harcourt and Benjamin Disraeli and William Gladstone and others were all generously striving for a foremost place in politics.

Mr. Austen Chamberlain is having an unlucky start as Chancellor of the Exchequer. He has been forced to admit that the revenue for the current financial year will not be sufficient to provide for the expenditure, and a deficit of several millions is anticipated. It has been necessary, at the same time, to increase the Navy Estimates by nearly two and a-half millions. There is a decrease in the Army Estimates; but then, on the other hand, there is the Somaliland Campaign to be paid for, so that some way of meeting the deficit will have to be found out. It is not a moment when the country is in a condition or in a mood to stand further taxation, since business for some time past has been extremely dull, and we are still in a period of depression. Were the Government to resort to the usual device and add something to the Income-tax, it would make them very unpopular indeed. The only alternative would seem to be the suspension of the Sinking Fund, under these circumstances a very justifiable measure.

In the course of the debate on the estimates of the Ministry of Justice in the Reichstag, Count von Bülow, the Imperial Chancellor, made a remark that has an interest beyond the borders of the Fatherland. He gave it as his opinion that all Governments are under an obligation to support one another for the common International defence against the danger of anarchism. Apart from the merits of this particular question, it is invariably good for Governments to have a common basis of action. The more points on which they can work together the less likely are they to get to loggerheads, and anarchism, as the Chancellor properly described it, is more in the nature of a moral plague than a political movement. The assassins who have attempted, sometimes with success and sometimes without it, to destroy the crowned heads of Europe, have generally been people in a condition that required medical opinion to say whether they were sane or not, and probably a sound diagnosis would find that any man who professes the doctrines of anarchism sincerely, and carries them to their logical conclusion, is touched in the brain somewhere. Thus, the sober sense of mankind would impel them to join together for the purpose of eradicating this poison from their system, just in the same way as they would combine to eradicate the thief or the murderer. Count von Bülow is therefore well justified in calling for the co-operation of the different Governments of Europe towards this end.

One of the many predictions with regard to the war, that we hear from one of the many *cognoscenti*, is that it is Russia's

intention to attempt the forcing of the Dardanelles with her Black Sea Fleet, for the special purpose of drawing England into the fray on the one side, and thus forcing the hand of her own ally, France, to come to her assistance on the other. Those who are disposed to accept such a forecast, may. In support it is asserted that the Black Sea Fleet has coal bunkers carrying fuel storage for short trips only, and not adapted at all for the long work they would have to do if they were to arrive at the present theatre of war. It seems to be difficult, in the estimate of probabilities, to keep a right sense of proportion. In the atmosphere created by the first successes of the Japanese, some have seemed to think that the war was already something like half over, forgetting that a Japanese initial success was foreshadowed by all that we knew with regard to her naval material in men and ships. Russia's vast resources have not yet been reckoned with. She is heavily weighted by the immense distance of transport to the Far East; but if her Government is strong enough, and her nationality has enough cohesion to stand the strain of a war expenditure protracted over years, it is not at all impossible that the ultimate result of the war may be to secure her hold of Eastern Asia more quickly, though at a far greater cost, than it would have been secured by her nominally peaceful mode of more gradual aggression.

Ornithological science has suffered a severe loss by the death, in his prime, of Mr. Charles Fergusson, whose body was found drowned a few days ago in the river Nairn. The late Mr. Fergusson was one of those self-taught naturalists of whom Edwards is to be taken as the type. Although Mr. Fergusson had lived at Nairn for many years, where he carried on the business of a market gardener and nurseryman, he was not, like Edwards, a native of the shores of the Moray Firth, but of Strathardle, in Perthshire. His knowledge of the birds of Scotland was perhaps unequalled, for the most part gleaned at first hand, and he was a narrator of some natural eloquence. His collection of eggs was one of the most complete of British species in the world. He was a constant correspondent to the Transactions of the Gaelic Society, a high authority on Highland and all Celtic customs and history—a self-taught and remarkable genius whom we are sorry to lose.

THE TIDAL WAVE IN THE WEST.

(The real damage was suffered by the fields of flowers, especially on the island of Bryher.—From "Country Life," February 13th.)

In London town the people wait
To hail the first spring flowers;
The boats are ready for their freight,
The gardeners count the hours.
Who shall be first? Whose land hath caught
The warmest of the sun?
Whose blooms be first to market brought?
An eager race they run.
Ah! little isle, it may not be;
Our lot is also thine,—
To hope,—then in the wasting sea
Lose all, without a sign.

WILLIAM H. DRAPER.

Very pathetic reading is to be found in a statement submitted by the Public Health Committee of the London County Council. It appears that on the night of January 20th it was agreed to take a census of the homeless poor in an area extending from Hyde Park on the west to the east end of Whitechapel Road, bounded on the north by High Holborn, Old Street, and Bethnal Green Road, and on the south by the Thames. The Medical Officer, in his report on the results, says that the Council's officers counted 1,463 men, 116 women, 46 boys, and 4 girls walking the streets, the boys and girls appearing to be under 16 years of age. They also found 100 males and 68 females sleeping on staircases, in doorways, and under arches, making 1,797 homeless persons. Although the observations of this particular night were restricted to one area, the Medical Officer holds that it probably contained practically all the homeless poor. The figures work out to this, that for every 2,000 persons in London one is homeless. On the same night, 23,442 persons slept in common lodging-houses, of whom 21,068 were single men, 1,517 single women, and 390 married couples. There were also 54 boys and 35 girls below 16 years of age.

We have given these figures without comment, as they speak for themselves, and present a problem that is worth the most careful study. One point only can we congratulate ourselves upon, and that is the fact of this crowd of homeless poor having been brought under some kind of observation. There is no reason to believe that there are more of them to-day than there were a quarter of a century ago. In fact, all the probabilities are in favour of the supposition that the number is decreasing, and that is all we can hope for as long as human nature remains

UORM

what it is, and human life is open to the vicissitudes it has experienced since the beginning of time. There will always be a submerged fraction, a fringe of outcasts hanging on to civilisation, but it is the duty of those who are in more favourable circumstances to do all that lies in their power towards its reduction. It is no pleasant or satisfactory feeling that in the midst of so much luxury and opulence as one finds in London there should be all this wretchedness. How to meet the difficulty is not easily suggested. Theoretically no human being in England need sleep under the bare skies, as the State system of workhouses and many benevolent institutions have been specially constituted to afford relief. But the conditions obtaining at these places do not always meet with acceptance, and the question to be faced is how to make the workhouse more welcome than the street, and yet not so comfortable that it will encourage idleness and loafing.

Rural experience has ever held that the beginning of March is a very critical moment as far as weather is concerned, and there are very few weather saws that can be trusted more than the well-known one that if March comes in like a lion it will go out like a lamb. If coming in like a lion means an onset of snowy, wintry weather and general discomfort, then assuredly the conditions this year have been fulfilled; but all that will be forgotten if a beneficial change should take place in the course of the month. Already, in spite of the soaked condition of the land, that is rendering agricultural work impossible, the general mildness of the winter has brought an appearance of spring almost too quickly to the fields. On high-lying ground where ploughing has been possible, the straight furrows standing against thin, bare plantations make a pretty and suggestive picture. Already the larks are singing their love song above the wide open pastures, the bright blue that spring brings with it is appearing on the head of the little tit, and everywhere the premonitions of finer weather are becoming apparent. After such a prolonged spell of dark, cloudy, and miserable days as have extended not only through the past winter, but over the autumn and a great part of the summer, a period of sunshine would be welcome indeed.

The fascinating, if somewhat illusive, science of weather prediction counts many devotees, and amongst them there is the most pleasing diversity of method. We have Baron Fridland von Nowack lecturing in London, before a distinguished audience, on the qualities of his wonderful "weather plant," which is said to point its hypersensitive leaves and tendrils in the direction from which atmospheric and seismic disturbances are to be expected within a space of twenty-eight days, the lunar month; and simultaneously we have Professor Gregory, of Melbourne University, discussing the institution of a Federal Meteorological College in the Antipodes, whose savants shall be engaged in studying the conditions in the ocean around Australia, in the confident belief that certain changes in these conditions foretell with absolute exactness the character of the seasons that will prevail in their vicinity a whole year in advance. In the multitude of these counsellors it seems scarcely possible but that wisdom is somewhere to be found, if only we knew where to look for it.

A recent commentator on the floods in the Thames Valley remarks rather aptly on the "Oriental" fashion in which we generally accept these visitations of abnormal weather. There is a species of fatalism in the apathy with which we regard on the one hand the periods of drought, and on the other the periods of inundation to which we find ourselves subjected in turn. It is pointed out that the one ought, if properly used, to be turned to account to correct the opposite extreme, and that if we could devise some means of storing the superabundance of flood-water in a season like that which we are just passing through (and it does not seem as if it ought to be an achievement impossible to accomplish), we might have enough and to spare for such times as those which immediately preceded it. It need hardly be said that the originator of the "Oriental" epithet was an American—and not one of the sterner sex.

Without going so far as to justify La Rochefoucauld's maxim that we find something not displeasing in others' misfortunes, we may still find some consolation for our inability to cope with the water in our own Thames Valley in the fact that on the neighbouring Continent they have been no more clever in dealing with their floods. All through the North of France, from Calais to Paris, the low-lying lands have been submerged; and southward again, over the flat plains of Touraine, the waters are but now abating from the face of the earth, and myriads of green plover are enjoying the unusual softness of the soaked fields, both at home and on the Continent. The damage to agriculture must be incalculably great, by reason of the immense quantity of seed that must be so soaked as to have lost all vitality.

The Government has made a vigorous attempt to cope with the "ca' canny" system favoured by the Trades Unions. It must be apparent, even to many of the strongest unionists, that this plan is detrimental to the character of the work done by those who believe in it. It means that there is no incentive whatever to extra exertion, and that, both as regards quality and quantity, the output of each labouring item is reduced to a dull uniformity. The Admiralty has taken the matter in hand, and introduced into the dockyard a premium system of payment which ought to counteract some of the ill effects. Its object is to "enable workmen to earn in addition to their ordinary weekly wages extra remuneration for doing work in less time than the fixed time allowed for it." The movement is one in the right direction, and we hope it will meet with the success it deserves.

The fact that it is becoming more and more difficult to find teachers for our schools is being very prominently brought before the public just now, and presents a problem which requires serious consideration on the part of the School Boards all over the country. One would have thought that the profession of teaching would commend itself to many on account of the short terms and long holidays; but apparently this is not the case, for in London alone it is said there will be as many as 400 vacancies before many weeks have elapsed. The reason of this state of affairs is that teachers are so badly paid. A fully-qualified assistant-master receives only £95 his first year; after two years £100, and so on; while the figures are much lower in the case of lady teachers. At the same time promotion is very slow and the work at times very discouraging, for if the class as a whole is dull, it is impossible for even a most capable and hard-working teacher to do himself justice with them, while another, less qualified but with a brighter class, achieves success. This results in one of two things—either the schools are understaffed, or the positions are filled by people not fully qualified for their work; and unless the profession can be made a more attractive and a more remunerative one, the growing distaste for it will continue to exist.

A CHILD'S GARDEN.

The road is dusty beneath my feet,
And the traffic sounds in the wide white street;
But I think last night some fairy's wing
Passed through my garden with touch of spring!

I wish I had seen those white feet pass
Over the green of the crisp short grass—
Magic feet since the daisies lift
Their faces to-day like a white snow-drift!

Gold laburnum and crimson may
Fill winds with fragrance on their way.
And the lilac's clusters of warm perfume
Drench my garden with scent and bloom.

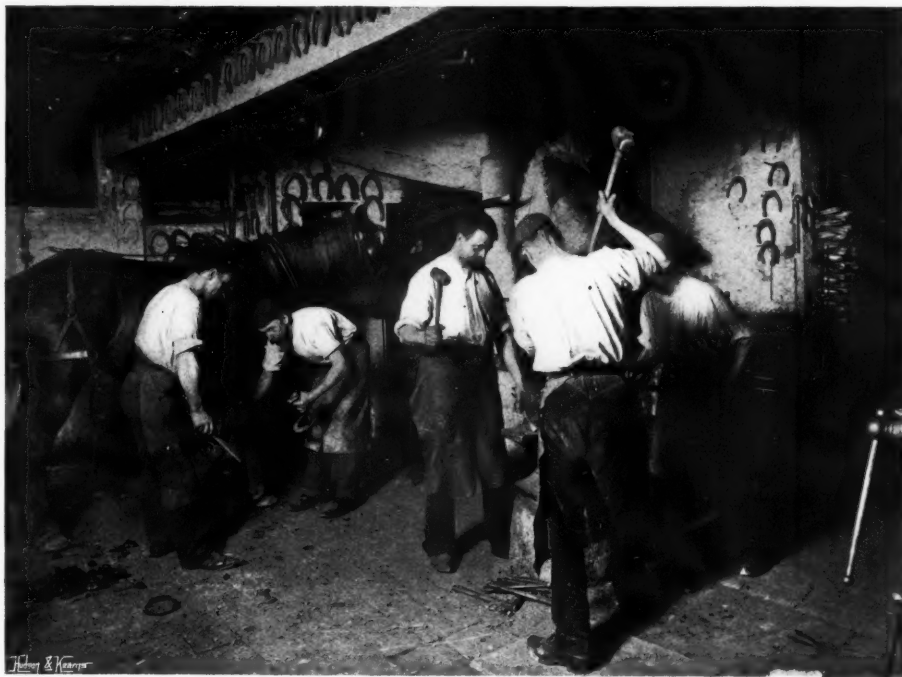
Beach trees drip their emerald tears
On the dew-wet grass with its slender spears;
And all my garden is blossoming
At one swift touch of a fairy's wing! J. CLARKE.

It is satisfactory to know that Mr. Sydney Buxton has been successful in getting a second reading of his Wild Birds Protection Acts Amendment Bill in the House of Commons. The object of this measure, as stated in its first clause, is to penalise any person who "on any pole, tree, wall, fence, or any other position elevated from the ground, shall affix, place, or set any spring, trap-gin, or other similar instrument calculated to cause bodily injury to any wild bird coming in contact therewith." No one disputes the needless cruelty involved in setting pole-traps. It usually happens that the unfortunate victim is caught by its feet, and, pulling the trap from the place where it was set, dangles by the legs till it is dead, or till the keeper comes and relieves it. The trap was originally invented for the purpose of taking hawks and owls, but the former of these birds is now so reduced in numbers that slaughter has become quite unnecessary, while it has been demonstrated that the owls, far from doing injury to game, are of the utmost service, by destroying rats, mice, and other small vermin of the same description. We hope that Mr. Buxton will be able to get his Bill through the present session, and that it will come into force immediately.

The war in the Far East is far-reaching in its consequences. It would not have been anticipated that it could have had much effect on the welfare of those singularly named species of salmon, the "dog," the "humplack," and the "colue," inhabitants of the British Columbian rivers running out into the Pacific, and regarded as inferior to the "sock-eye," which is alone considered to be the food, when canned, for epicures. But large orders for these unfortunately named fish are said to have been received by the Columbian canneries for the commissariat of the Japanese soldiers.

THE BLACKSMITH'S SHOP.

THE changes in agriculture that have had so distressful an effect on a great number of village callings, have had an exactly opposite result on that of the blacksmith. Reasoning from the particular to the general, I know one village that is typical of thousands of others. It is situated about six miles from a railway station, and the inhabitants are wholly dependent on husbandry for a livelihood. I do not mean that they are all agricultural labourers, but still that is the only industry, and although the people engaged in it have to have clothes and boots and shoes and food, they usually procure them at a distance. A quarter of a century ago these were all supplied in the hamlet itself. There stood in the centre of the long, straggling street a large shop in which you could buy anything, from a box of matches to a lawn-mower, and thither the people came for their sugar and their candles, their tobacco and their paraffin oil, their snuff and their groceries. The place



F. Marsh.

TRYING A FIT.

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has disappeared now, the woman who kept the shop is dead, and the two daughters who helped her have each married and gone off into a far country, while for many a year the ploughshare has passed over what were the foundations of the cottage, and it has not left a snow-drop or a rose to tell where the little garden once bloomed. Further down the street was a saddler's shop, and the saddler in those days used to make a good living, partly from what he picked up in the way of passing custom, and partly because he went to the great houses and the farm

steadings and worked there two or three days at a time at their harness and their oddments. His place, too, is empty, and so is that of the village shoemaker, who sat with his last on his knee, and in the intervals of his work discussed politics with the idlers who made his shop a meeting-place. His trade, too, is gone. These callings have been affected by two different things. First, there has been a diminution in the population of the villages,



F. Marsh.

THE HAMMER.

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E. M. Barrows.

MAKING THE SHOE.

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and, secondly, people in towns are always perfecting their means of distribution. The commercial traveller and the tradesman's cart have superseded the village shop, while more and more people get into the habit of going to a little town every Saturday and purchasing such things as boots and shoes and clothes, cheap and ready-made. The farmers and the gentry have long ceased to patronise the village tradesmen, the truth probably being that with an improved taste they want things finer and better than their forefathers did, and are not content with the strong work done for them in the country. So, too, with the tailor. I was reading a book the other day that recalled vividly a practice which used to prevail in the country until comparatively recent times. Very few people in an agricultural district thought of buying things ready-made, or even of ordering them. Instead of that, they got the tailor into the house for three or four days. He brought his goose with him, and sat on the kitchen table, and while, like the guidwife in the poem of Burns, "he made auld claes look amaisht as weel as new," he enlivened the general dulness of the cottage by whistling, or what he called "soughing over," the old landward songs and ballads, so that it might well be said "a merry wight was he." He was great on Nature-lore, too; at least, he knew every pool where a salmon could be had, every field in which the partridges assembled at night, every tree on which a pheasant took its good-night perch. According to rumour, he was often busier by night than he had been by day, and on Sundays he lived on the fat of the land, that is to say, game, roast and boiled, with vegetables from his garden.

as a matter of fact, horses never were more valuable than they are to-day, and while they are in use they will always



E. M. Barrows.

PREPARING THE HOOF.

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need shoeing. Doing this may not have as many elements of romance in it as was the case in old time. In the novels that used to delight and distract our boyhood, the blacksmith frequently played a leading part in the elopements. He was, at the end of the journey, ready to forge the chains stronger than those that he made for tracing a harrow, and, as like as not, he was much wanted in the course of the journey. The horse on which the bride and bridegroom were riding pillion often cast a shoe just at the very moment when the blacksmith was far away regaling himself with strong ale, and he was sent for with an insistence that proved how important he was. Still worse was it when the irate father, following in the family coach, had to pull up at the door and step out, breathless and fuming, while the leisurely smith attended to the steeds. The weary traveller, too, coming I know not whence, and going to some equally vague country, knight and lord and squire in the good old days, were all equally dependent on the services of the casual smith. In our time we seek for adventures in a different way, but often the plight of the motorist would be pitiable indeed if there were no smith of a mechanical turn who could put right those machines which seem for ever going wrong. Then the farmer, although he buys his



F. Marsh.

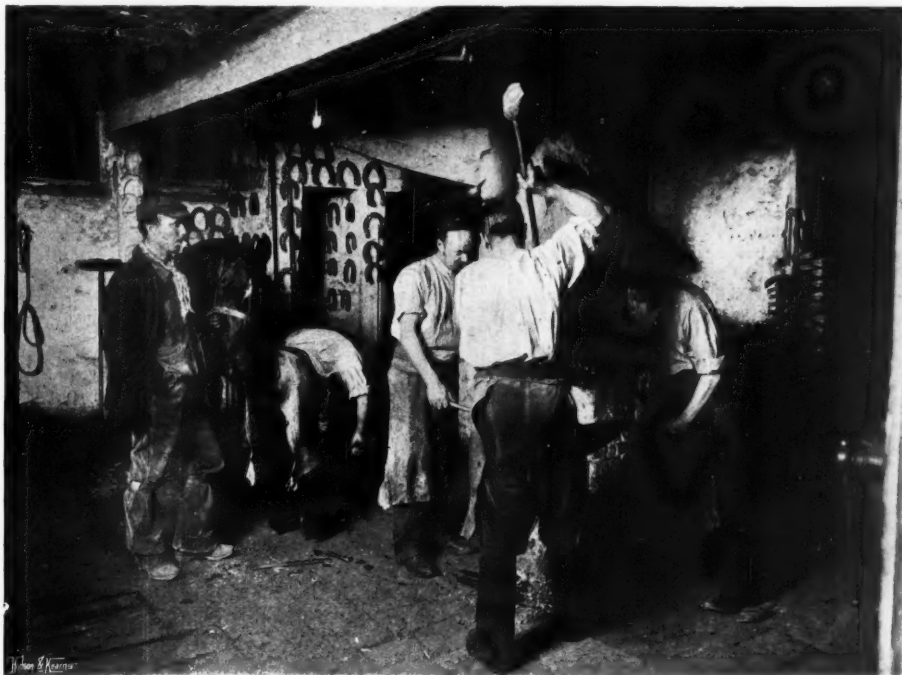
THE YOKEL LOOKING ON.

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contrivances mostly in the town, and sends to the makers for important repairs, is constantly in need of the village blacksmith for the innumerable mendings necessary for machinery. To mend a harrow, to sharpen the coulter of a plough, to right a threshing machine that has gone out of gear, to attend to some defect in the gas-engine—these are some of the tasks waiting daily for the blacksmith, and if he be an all-round man, he need never be short of work in an agricultural district. He still preserves something of his ancient character. Using the great hammer and the anvil has given him a brawny arm that shows to perfection when with one hand he is blowing the bellows of the glowing smithy fire, and with the other holding a piece of iron which he means to shape into a horseshoe. He is usually hearty and frank and strong, and remains now as he always has been—a pillar of village society.

Even the old-fashioned blacksmith was something of a handy man, as he was applied to as the man who could help in all kinds of accidents that could possibly happen to vehicles or machinery. He was often called upon also to make tools, when farmers depended upon hand labour much more than they are in the habit of doing now. No doubt some of our readers will be able to remember the state of affairs as it was thirty-five or forty years ago. At that time the reaping machine had not come into general use, but the shearing was done by bands of harvesters armed with sickles or hooks. They were not made in the village, but imported from some manufacturing town. Sometimes, however, the blacksmith sold them, and often he was engaged for hours together grinding and fitting them for use. In those days rakes and hoes were in common use on the field, and the corn was threshed by means of a machine that was generally driven by water, though sometimes by horse-power. It was rather cranky machinery as a rule, and constantly went out of repair. Indeed, a flood seldom occurred without bringing temporary ruin to the outdoor machinery in its way. It was thought for a time that the introduction of new and patent contrivances would throw the village blacksmith out of work, but this has

happens to live on one of the great highways is continually being called upon to do simple and rapid repairs. Motorists will agree in saying that some of these village mechanics have shown a wonderful aptitude in picking up the principles that underlie the working of a motor-car, and are frequently able to give valuable assistance when, for some reason or other, the chauffeur



F. Marsh.

ON THE ANVIL.

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has been dispensed with, and a breakdown has occurred. He lives under conditions differing much from those that prevailed in the time of his ancestors, but is still the same jolly old smith.

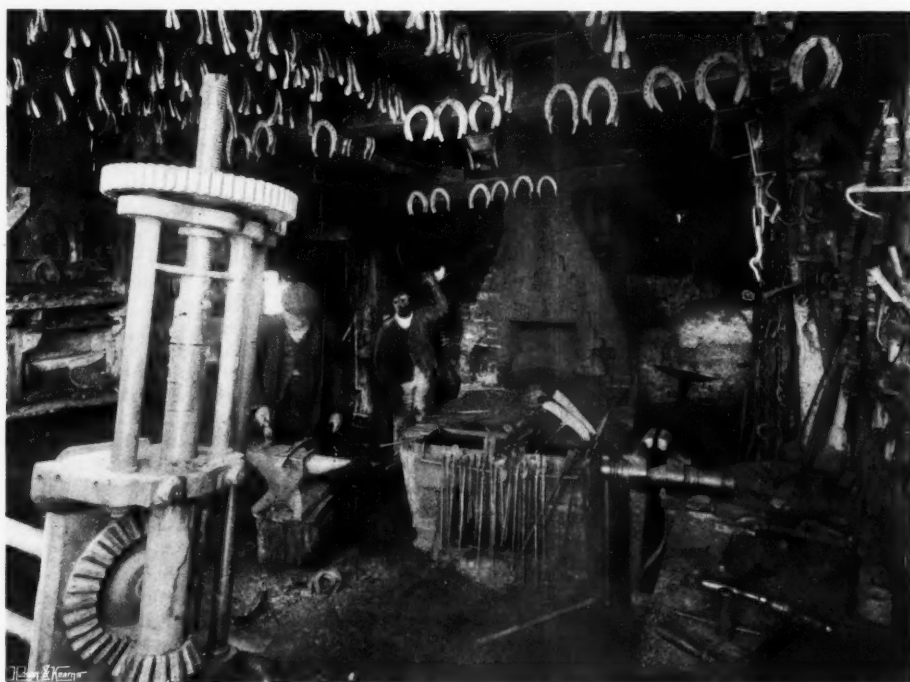
WILD COUNTRY LIFE.

"SPARROW FIGHTS."

NOW is the season of alarms and excursions all over the garden, and one is quite glad that our home-staying birds thus settle their differences, as to wives and nesting sites, before the summer visitors arrive; otherwise, with all of them quarrelling together, there would be no peace at all. As it is, the vulgar brawling of the sparrows, when half-a-dozen males vociferously pursue a single female through the bushes, could be dispensed with. Yet these "sparrow fights" are very interesting, because a proper explanation of their meaning and utility is still wanting. That in some way they conduce to the success of the sparrow in the struggle for existence is manifest; because these noisy disturbances are characteristic of all house-sparrows everywhere during the breeding season, and Nature is not able to stereotype any habit in the character of a species except by the slow process of the survival of the fittest. In other words, it is plain that those sparrows which did not in past ages take part in these harum-scarum pursuits of solitary hen birds failed to make their proper mark in the community.

NOT A STRUGGLE FOR WIVES.

One might therefore suppose that, when we look on at a "sparrow fight," we see a repetition in bird-life of the old human custom of marriage by capture, and that it has become characteristic of an aggressive, pushing bird like the sparrow, because in each generation the most persistent and pushful suitors would the sooner obtain wives and rear families to carry on the energetic family tradition. But several facts militate against this simple and easy reading of the evolution of the sparrow. In the first place, the disturbance always seems to end "in the air," so to speak. None of the jostling and shouting males ever seems to get more than a peck in the eye or something of that kind from the fair object of his pursuit—who is thoroughly well able to take care of herself apparently among the hooligans—and if any male remains by her side afterwards, giving himself the spatch-cocked airs in which love-sick sparrows delight, he is always one who took little part in the row, but followed it up at a little distance.



Mrs. Delors Broughton.

AT THE BELLWS.

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been far from being the case. True he has lost many of his old jobs, which he is never likely to find again, but others have come in their place. Even the bicycle has, so to speak, brought grist to his mill, for this useful machine, as we need scarcely say, has its own liability to accidents, and the blacksmith who

IMMORAL MARRIED BIRDS.

It seems plain, in fact, that the hen sparrow, whom these licentious suitors were violently hustling all over the place, is a respectable married bird, and that her husband was a more or less helpless witness of the disgraceful scene. As, moreover, when a chase begins every male sparrow in the immediate vicinity seems to take a vigorous part in it, we must conclude that the married male sparrows are just as bad as the unmarried in thrusting their apparently very unwelcome attentions upon their neighbours' wives. It is lucky that sparrows, unlike human beings, do not cherish malice against friends who thus forcibly attempt to violate their rights, else strife upon the water-pipes would never end. But the mere fact that sparrows are thus tolerant of each other's offences does not explain why it has become the universal practice of sparrows to commit them. These scuffling courtships of married birds must serve some useful purpose in the political economy of sparrowdom.

WILD DUCK CHASES.

In attempting to discover the solution of a problem in Nature, one always turns, in the first instance, to analogy, and the manners of wild duck at once suggest a parallel to those of the sparrows. In is in later spring that, in any neighbourhood where wild duck breed freely, you may see, towards sunset on any afternoon, great chases taking place all over the sky, one duck in each case being hotly pursued by a close cluster of mallards, who follow her in every swerve and twist of flight so closely that all might be one piece of aerial mechanism. The resemblance of this hue-and-cry of mallards to the scurrying "sparrow fights" among the bushes is accentuated usually by a solitary mallard bringing up the rear. He, no doubt, is the injured husband who will be left, when the tumult is over, "showing off" beside his much-hunted wife.

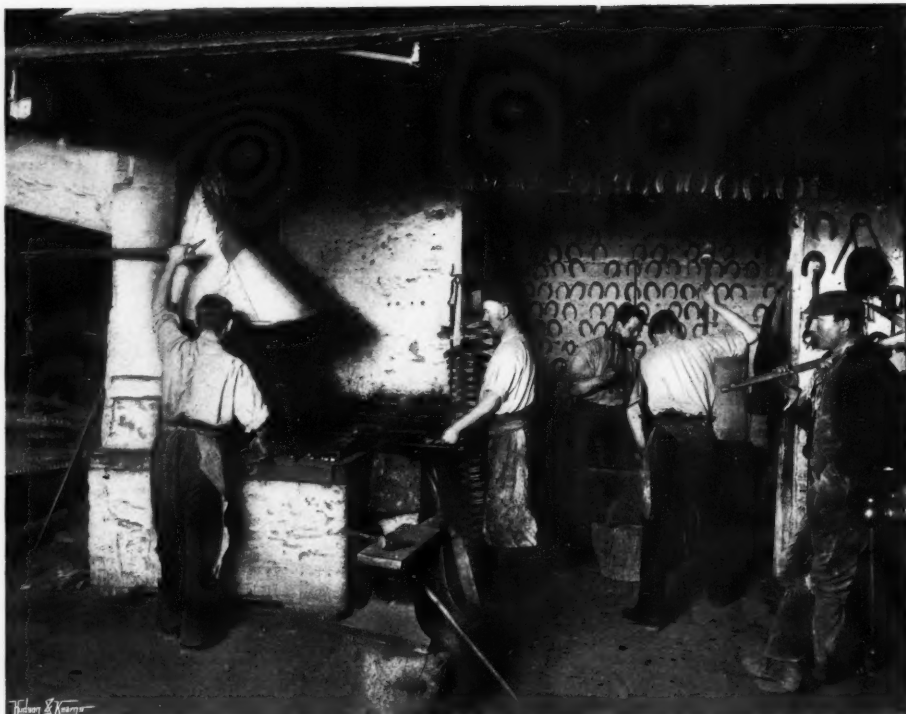
AS BAD AS THE SPARROWS.

Ordinarily these chases aloft end out of sight behind some distant hill or wood; but occasionally one of the pursuing mallards proves too swift for the fugitive. Then you may see him actually overtake her, and with his superior strength force her down an inclined plane of air swiftly to the ground, all the others following in a cluster. The meaning of this strange drama may easily be understood from the proceedings of pinioned mallards at the same season. In the decoys where they are kept, each duck, as she comes off her nest, is liable to become the bone of unseemly contention between several mallards, who are loafing about waiting for their own wives; and the indignant husband is often hard put to it to effect a rescue.

A CAUSE OF HYBRIDISM?

This behaviour of the wedded mallards confirms our suspicion with regard to the sparrows, that it is not only the lonely, mateless bachelor who tries to possess himself of his neighbour's wife by force, but that among these and some other kinds of birds Nature has created a habit of rampant immorality. And perhaps this throws a light upon two curious phenomena, which have often been observed in connection with wild ducks and sparrows respectively. One of these is the frequent occurrence of hybrids between different kinds of wild ducks; for, if we bear in mind how remarkably similar the females of many species of wild ducks are, although the males may be strikingly different in plumage, we see how very closely allied the species are and how easily in the rough-and-tumble of their violent courtship a mistake may happen—if it is necessary to credit the mallard with any desire to draw nice distinctions of species in his amours. Certainly, if the wild mallard has this desire, he fails to transmit it to his domesticated descendants.

Now, since there is an obvious parallelism between the conduct of the mallards and the sparrows, and we know from the goings on in a duck-decoy



F. Marsh. THE BLACKSMITH'S SHOP: HEATING THE IRON.

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and round our ornamental waters that neither the wild duck nor his tame descendant exhibit any of that marital constancy which has been supposed to be the shining virtue of paired birds, we are justified in supposing the sparrow, who behaves in the same sort of way, is no better. He has not, indeed, the excuse (or the temptation) of very closely-allied species to make mistakes, for his solitary near relative, the tree-sparrow, has a wife whose masculine appearance must, one would think, be very uninviting from the house-sparrow's point of view. Nevertheless, all who have made any special study of house-sparrows' eggs are aware that there is almost always one, and sometimes more than one, in each nest which altogether differs in character and appearance from the other eggs of the clutch. If this "odd egg," as it is called, of the house-sparrow has any connection with the promiscuous love-making of the male birds, it opens the way to a number of interesting speculations of far-reaching value in connection with evolution.

E. K. R.

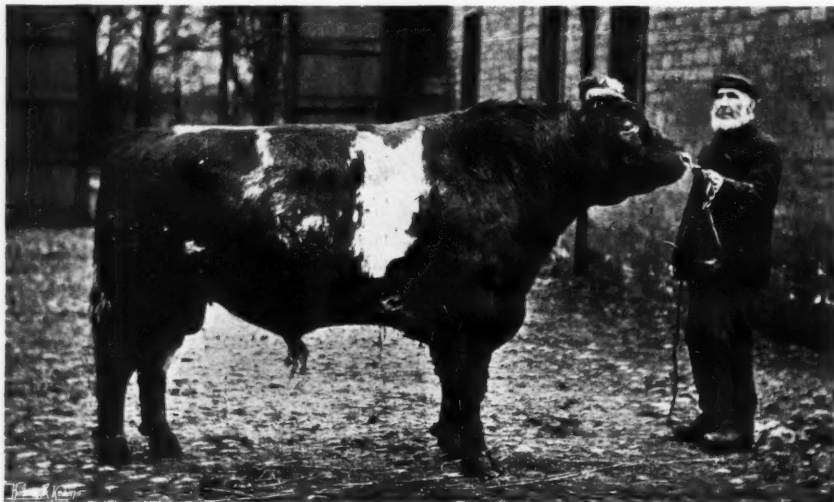
FROM THE FARMS.

"OUR TOMMY!"

M. R. ARTHUR LAWSON writes: "I enclose a photograph of Tommy Crookdake, the bailiff in charge of Sir Wilfrid Lawson's fine herd of pedigree shorthorn cattle at Brayton Hall. He is holding a favourite bull, named Golden Victor (78993), which heads the celebrated herd. I hope you will do me the favour of inserting his picture in your excellent paper. 'Tommy' is an old and trusty retainer, who thoroughly understands cattle-breeding. He has been at Brayton Hall (the home of fox-hunters and shorthorn-lovers) in Cumberland for a great many years, and is a devoted admirer of Sir Wilfrid Lawson, who has always treated his *employés* with the greatest consideration and kindness. A two-handed 'crack' (such as all true Cumbrians love) with 'Tommy,' in his kitchen 'ingle-nook,' is worth a king's ransom. 'Tommy' was born and bred at Ireby, the home of the far-famed John Peel, with whom the subject of this sketch often hunted, when a boy. 'Peel was a tarrable kind mon!' quoth 'Tommy,' and had tell us lads aw t' names of t' hoonnds! Aye! He was a graand ould feller!' The two things that 'Tommy' likes best are (1) a shorthorn sale, and (2) a fox-hunt on Binsey Fell with the 'Spatree Harriers, to which staunch pack he yearly subscribes 5s. One of 'Tommy's' proudest moments was when he was awakened from well-earned repose at 10 p.m., by a yell under his window, and informed that 'Mister Mordaunt had won the Cumberland Hunt Point-to-Point Race,' a gallant victory for Brayton Hall. It is men like 'Tommy' who form the backbone of British farming."

THE LAMBING SEASON.

Reports of a more or less discouraging nature continue to be received from all the



"OUR TOMMY!"

different flock-masters in the country. Owing to the number of lambs that have died and ewes that have been lost, the season threatens to be one of the worst known during recent years. In some flocks the average number of ewes that have been lost is said to be about 3 per cent., and those which have got off with a loss of 2 per cent. have been fortunate. As we write, we are threatened with some really wintry weather, but a spell of cold will be much less prejudicial to the flocks than the rain of which we have had so much, though within the last few days there has been a diminution in the too copious supply. For months the Thames has not been in its normal condition until now, but once more it is within its banks, and that is fair proof that the superabundance of rain has ceased. If a spell of dry weather were to come with March—which, by the by, has come romping in like a lion, and therefore ought to depart like a lamb—the later flocks, at least, will still be able to make up for lost time.

TOILERS OF THE FIELD.

Our photograph shows a condition of things rapidly passing away. Time was when nearly all the work of the farm was done by women, and, indeed, to a large extent, this is still the case in the extreme North of England. Curiously enough the practice prevails where wages are on a high scale, and it is rapidly becoming obsolete where they are low. We would regret the disappearance of these women from the fields much more than we do were it not for certain changes in their habits. A generation ago the fieldfaring woman, whatever else she might be, was usually a picture of health, especially when she was young, though it has often been noticed that a girl who is subject to hard outdoor work soon becomes old. At twenty these women used to be buxom, red-cheeked lasses, with limbs that would not disgrace the other sex, and figures to match. But they lose their good looks very early, and at thirty begin to show some of the withered appearance of age. Perhaps this is a proof that farm labour is really too hard for women, and if so it would be cruel to regret the fact that they are relinquishing it; but to-day another factor has come in, and the women of the fields are in many cases pale and anæmic. Of old it used to be the case that they were ashamed of a red or, as they called it, a blowsy complexion. They did not like this, because it came to be almost a proverbial saying in the North that when a woman was healthy to the point of coarseness she was "desht like a muckle bondager." The poor girls many a time dusted their faces with flour before starting for church, in order to make themselves look genteel, but after that they took to eating uncooked rice and adopting other mischievous practices to blanch their complexions. That is why they look so pale and ill to-day.



J. Patrick.

Exchange, from the members of which many of our racing yachtsmen are culled. Added to this the country has experienced a sequence of several years' bad trade generally, in consequence of which many owners have found money so "tight" that they have had to abandon yachting for a time. Thus here, as in most things in this world, money is the key to the situation, and unless the Y.R.A. can find means of reducing the cost, class racing will, in a few years' time, be as extinct as the pterodactyl.

Now, how can this desired reduction in expense be effected? The answer is not easy to find, but I think the first move should be one that has a tendency to prolong the life of a yacht. Under present conditions a boat may be outclassed in a few months, and as there is no market for such craft, the unfortunate owner has perforce to sell his costly racing machine for a mere breaking-up price.

The life of racing craft might be prolonged in two ways. Firstly, by providing racing classes for those which are *fassé*; secondly, by imposing such scantling restrictions as would ensure their being built of sufficient strength to render them suitable for conversion into cruisers. As regards the first of these methods, I would suggest that each of the Y.R.A. classes be backed by a second division of similar rating in which out-classed craft could race under a handicap limited to a few seconds per mile. It would be a great inducement to men to build to the Y.R.A. classes if they could rest assured that several years of good sport could be obtained even after their craft had become outclassed in the premier division. Should an owner

TOILERS OF THE FIELD.

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YACHTING: THE DECAY OF CLASS RACING.

HE would indeed be an optimist who could view the present condition of class racing in this country with anything but apprehension. When one recalls the palmy days of ten years ago, and thinks of the fine fleet of big cutters which raced at all the principal regattas round the coast, last season's record is somewhat melancholy reading. On reviewing the Yacht Racing Association classes we find that they were represented as follows: Exceeding 65ft. linear rating, nil; 65ft. l.r., nil; 52ft. l.r., four yachts; 42ft. l.r., nil; 36ft. l.r., three yachts; 30ft. l.r., four yachts; 24ft. l.r., four yachts; 18ft. l.r., three yachts.

By the employment of a little mental arithmetic we arrive at the fact that these figures show an average of 2.25 boats per class, truly a sorry state of affairs. Now, what are the causes of this decline, and are they of such a nature as can be remedied? In the first place, I should say that the late war, both directly and indirectly, has been the prime factor. When things were going badly in South Africa, a number of yachtsmen abandoned their sport to hasten to the front, and, alas! many never came back. Indirectly the Boer War has had a far-reaching effect on sports of every description, for it brought evil times to the Stock

wish to remain in the first division, he could reasonably expect to sell his boat for a fair price, as there would always be a demand for such a yacht for the subsidiary class. This idea is brought to my mind by the success which has attended the ex-52ft. class, started by the London Sailing Club two years since. It numbers six boats which have enjoyed capital sport. It is interesting to note that the only Y.R.A. class which shows any semblance of life is that for 52-footers, and I attribute not a little of its success to the existence of this ex-52ft. class which offers a welcome to the superannuated.

The cost of maintaining a yacht in racing trim has increased considerably of late years, and unless some steps be taken to check reckless expenditure, the sport will soon be confined exclusively to the very wealthy. The wages bill is by far the most serious item which the owner of a racing craft has to face, for not only does he have to pay the men a handsome weekly wage, but they also demand extra "racing money." In consequence of this practice, the owner with the longest purse obtains the smartest crew, and as usually he has also the best boat—for he can go on building new craft until he gets a flyer—the man of moderate means is slowly but surely driven from the fold. The only way in which extravagance in the matter of wages can be checked is by the adoption of a uniform scale, not merely of salary, but also racing money, and this could only be achieved by the legislation of the Y.R.A. The evil might of course be remedied by the employment of amateur crews; but, unfortunately, with racing nearly every day of the week, this is next to impossible. The Corinthian sailor is, as a rule, culled from the ranks of business men, who have but little leisure to devote to sport, hence the difficulty of getting together an amateur crew for the whole season. To pick up stray amateurs in a haphazard manner for each race would be a suicidal policy for an owner to adopt, as it is necessary, for the efficient

handling of a racing yacht, for the crew not only to be familiar with the gear, but also to be accustomed to working with one another.

Now let us see what steps the Y.R.A. have taken to cope with the situation. They recently appointed a committee to enquire into the cause of the decline in class racing, and the result of the latter's deliberations was the following recommendations to the council:

"1. That the skin of yachts shall be either of wood or steel.

"2. That the rating rule does not sufficiently check a bad form of bow, and they consider it would be for the benefit of yacht-racing that the mode of measuring *L* in the formula be reconsidered, as at the present time such alteration would interfere very little with vested interests. That in rule 54 the words 'or less than half the extreme beam' shall read 'or less than 0.6 the extreme beam.'

"3. No time-allowance clause now in the appendix should be inserted in the rules.

"4. That in the classes of 52 linear rating and under the number of paid hands shall be limited as follows: Class 18, 1 hand; class 24, 1 hand; class 30, 2 hands; class 36, 3 hands; class 42, 4 hands; class 52, 7 hands.

"5. If a pilot is carried, he is to count as a paid hand.

"6. That in the classes of 65ft. to 30ft. inclusive, hollow masts be abolished.

"7. That yachts which sailed with hollow masts during 1903 or previously shall be allowed to use hollow masts during the season of 1904.

"8. That the Y.R.A. should take steps to impress upon the sailing committees of yacht clubs, and other bodies giving regattas under their rules, the desirability of arranging their prizes so as to offer encouragement so far as they are able to the Y.R.A. linear rating classes."

The committee were also of opinion that it would be desirable to build racing yachts to a scantling rule, but were not prepared to definitely recommend the adoption of Lloyd's rules or a Y.R.A. scantling rule until further enquiry had been made of Lloyd's and the yacht designers.

Let us briefly analyse this report. Item 1 is to abolish the use of costly alloys in the plating of racing craft. Clause 2 is a suggestion to alter the rating rule, but as the present formula was fixed for a term of years which does not expire until 1907, such an alteration could only be effected by the unanimous

consent of present owners. Designers, moreover, tell us that a change of rule usually has a deterrent effect on building, and if that be the case, the present is hardly the time for a revision of the rating formula. The third recommendation is a comparatively trivial one, for it is merely to abolish time allowance for any slight difference in rating in the classes of 65ft. downwards. Item 4 is an important suggestion, being a proposal to limit working expenses by restricting the number of paid hands employed on racing craft of 52ft. rating and under. No. 5 is a step in the same direction. Clause 6 also aims at the reduction of expense by the abolishment of the hollow mast, which is not only a costly spar in the first instance, but is, moreover, so unreliable as to compel an owner to keep a duplicate. A hollow mast takes some little time to build, and should the owner not provide against the contingency of an accident he must, in such an event, either handicap himself by shipping a solid spar or else refrain from racing whilst a new hollow one is being constructed. Item 7 is a rider to Number 6, and Clause 8 calls for no comment. The last paragraph in the report, which relates to scantling, is by far the most important of all, but the committee evidently approached the subject in a half-hearted manner. It will be seen that Clauses 1, 4, 5, and 6 all point to the desirability of a reduction in the cost of class racing, the question of expense being evidently the crux of the whole matter; but I fear the remedy suggested by the committee is not of sufficiently drastic a nature to cope successfully with the situation.

The agenda for the annual general meeting of the Y.R.A. was based on the committee's report, but the result was most disappointing. Of the eight recommendations quoted the only items which received sufficient votes to become law were the comparatively unimportant ones 3 and 8, although an amendment limiting the number of paid hands was also carried. The position is thus but little ameliorated, and it seems as if class racing were doomed to die a natural death.

Contrasting the brilliant days of the early nineties, when Britannia was at the zenith of her fame, with the present condition of the sport, one can but heave a sigh of regret, and murmur, "Sic transit gloria mundi."

FRANCIS B. COOKE.

THE BEGINNINGS OF ANGLING.

THOSE who have been fishers for any length of time have probably seen something like the following: To the trout stream arrives a prosperous middle-aged gentleman. He is clad in the best fishing suit that could be made in Bond Street. His feet are clothed in water-tight boots, and his legs encased in long waders. On his back



L. Biggs. WHERE THE RED-FINNED PERCH LIES. Copyright



L. Biggs. A PHILOSOPHIC ANGLER. Copyright

is the latest invention in the way of fishing baskets, and in his hand the most beautiful rod that money could buy or skill invent, while his fishing book, his flies, his gut and lines are all in keeping. Probably he has learnt to cast artistically too, for he is not so stupid as to embark on an adventure of this kind without previous training. And yet how often does it happen that he



R. W. Robinson.

IN NATURE'S SCHOOL.

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whips the stream in vain. Cast he never so cunningly, the little fishes refuse to be charmed, until at last he is almost forced to the conclusion that the usual inhabitants of the stream have departed into a far country. Great is his surprise and almost consternation when a little ragged urchin from some neighbouring farm appears on the stream. His trousers are like those of the needy knife-grinder, and his other clothes appear to have been worn by a succession of elder brothers, while the rod he wields has evidently been pieced together by himself, or at best constructed by the village joiner. Yet he begins to fish, and the brown trout are unable to withstand his allurements. Out they come one by one, until a goodly basket has been caught. Only he has no basket, but he runs either a sprig of willow, or, failing that, a piece of string through the gills of the fish, and nonchalantly carries them off in a bundle, proving once more that skill in this pastime counts for much more than equipment. Our middle-aged friend, gifted though he be with all the enthusiasm in the world, may look on this feat with despair if, as we suppose, he has taken to fishing after success has been achieved in some profession or business. Should certain lessons not be learnt in

his early wanderings on summer days, when he lounged under the willow tree or strolled idly along the bank, we may be sure his



R. W. Robinson.

AT THE BROOK'S MOUTH.

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young eye was often attracted by the trout that at his approach scurried hither and thither about the pool, eventually rushing under a stone or into some hole in the bank where they were hidden from him. He would not be an average boy if he did not take off his boots and stockings and make a fair attempt at catching the fish by the most straightforward method known, that is to say, with the hand. In a little while his natural art comes in, and he discovers that if you put your hand under a trout's belly the fish seems rather to like it than otherwise; and provided all is done gently, the hand may be tightened till the fish can be lifted out of the water, and when this has been accomplished the boy has performed one feat for which he will receive the applause of his fellow-mortals—he has tickled a trout.

And so as he grows older the love of fishing grows too. It well may be that the first thing actually caught with a rod was a fresh-water mussel, though older people may laugh at the idea of going fishing for shellfish. But the fresh-water mussel all but buried in the mud of some pool opens the shell which is its mouth, and there patiently awaits what fortune or the slowly-moving water



R. W. Robinson

PUTTING ON BAIT.

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will drift into it. Now it is an easy matter to cut a wand of hazel or of willow and to sharpen the end a little. Then you take the thick end in your hand and gently insert the point into the open mouth of your quarry. Immediately it closes with a grip like a vice, and when the rod is withdrawn there is a mussel dangling at the end of it—a useless prize bringing nothing but the pleasure of capture, although at one time pearls were much sought for in the inside of these shells, and at times have been actually found. But the little urchin scarcely out of long clothes does not know this, and if he did would only bring despair upon himself, because you must open many many mussels before you find a pearl!

However, such tame sport will not long satisfy him, and the merry twinkling eye of youth cares less for still life than for those creatures that have life and motion. Among them is the loach, the "Maggie Lotchet," as it is called in the kindly North. Now this bearded little fish lies full length on the sand or gravel, and at your approach makes a most agitated whirling scurry away and flops down again beside a stone. How shall we catch her? The boy is not possessed of many implements, but probably he has an ancient blunt pocket-knife in his possession. Now when Maggie is lying at rest on the sand you bring the blade of the pocket-knife gently over her, for the sand on the other side is soft, and she will only become a little embedded, so that with the other hand she can be lifted out. But mark the lesson that the child is unconsciously learning. A little experience



R. W. Robinson.

A HOME-MADE ROD.

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quickly shows him that it is necessary to be very slow and very gentle if you would approach a fish successfully. All wild things are scared by anything in the nature of a rapid movement; but they seem to have little fear of all that is motionless or what moves very very slowly. Another lesson that he has probably picked up before he has wandered very long by the side of a stream is that the habit of fish is always to wait for food with their heads up stream. It is quite reasonable, when you come to

think of it, because the worms and grubs and flies that the water brings to them must all float downward, and when the fish go out in search of food they are waiting for what the brook will offer them. Equally natural is it that when frightened they rush down stream, as of course their wanderings in search of food have all taken them away from home, so to speak. Now, from these facts, even his tender reasoning powers quickly lead him to see that if you wish to approach a fish, the best way is to do so by going up stream, as thus you are coming behind the creature, and his eyes cannot see backward, whereas if you were to walk down stream you would meet him full in the face. It follows equally, that if you are casting a lure to them, the best way is to get above the fish and let the lure float down towards its mouth, because that is the way its ordinary food comes, and it cannot see you as long as you keep well behind. He will learn that when after fish he is after a very timid and wary prey. The sight of a man on the bank will set the trout all flying to their quarters, and I have often seen one take alarm, merely because a swallow following its prey cast its fluttering shadow on the stream, while such occurrences as sheep or cattle wading in the water are perfectly terrifying in their effect. At the same time, it is curious to note how much more evanescent terror is in the dumb creation than it is in mankind. You shoot at a couple of partridges and kill one, and the other flies over the hedge and straightway begins feeding, and so with fish. They hurry away in the utmost fright, and yet in a little while they will be found back just where they were before, like a flock of conies that scamper into their holes at the sound of a gun, and peep out again as soon as its echoes have died away. Further even than this the boy, loafing and idling about, as it is pleasant that at least some sorts of boy should do, comes to know exactly every hole and corner of the stream and what there is in it. He has watched the



L. Biggs.

THE HAPPY TERRIER.

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pike under the willow and seen him going slowly up, sometimes by the weeds, or dashing like some ravenous wild beast at some smaller fish happening to come his way. He knows the pool to which the great salmon returns year by year, and which so many anglers cast over in vain. He loves the bay where the shoal of red-finned perch come wandering along on sunny afternoons with their banners up, their spears ready for battle; well he knows those spears! Even the eel he has not failed to notice, crawling like some unclean reptile in the deep pools, greedy for anything that will come in his way. It will not be very long before he learns to set a night line, and, in fact, to become an amateur poacher on a small scale. Of course, it is quite innocent poaching, and nobody who has ever reached to any eminence as a naturalist but has tried it a little. This, however, is the way in which the village boy is so often better than the perfectly-equipped angler, and if the latter should read this, perhaps it may induce him to

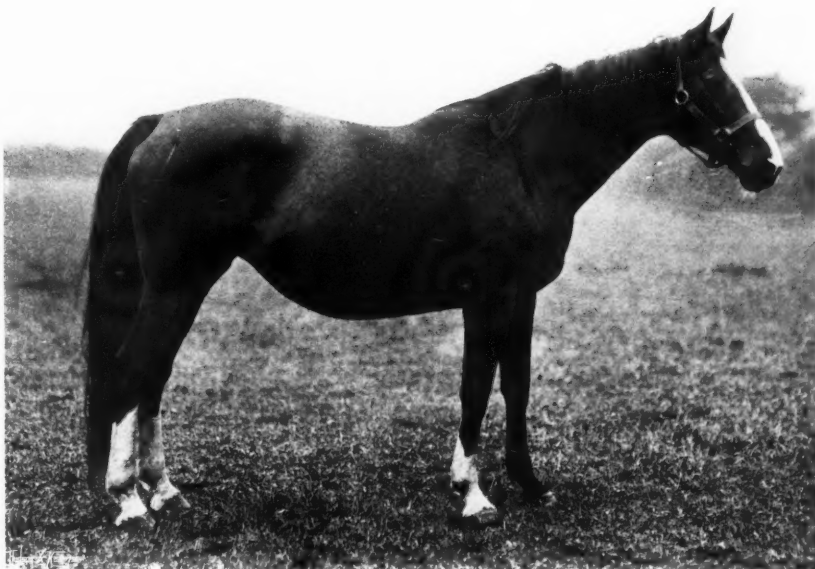
take heed that any young people over whom he may happen to have control shall have free and unlimited liberty to learn what the brook says and the wind sings and earth and water have to tell of the things that dwell in or on them.

It may not result in knowledge that will have immediate value in the market-place, but the goddess of the open air has more valuable gifts than this to bestow on those who resort to her shrine. She yields the sweetest and purest pleasure that it has been given to man to enjoy, and with that pleasure she bestows the scarcely less valuable gift of health. When the young human personality is forced to leave behind him the joys and sorrows of childhood, and to enter into a battle for a place and a name on the earth, it will always be a consolation and a happiness to him if the hours that can be snatched from business are bestowed on such a health-giving recreation as fishing. His attention to figures and facts and business affairs will only whet the appetite with which he enjoys country life.

WESTERHAM HILL STUD.

TO all real lovers of the thorough-bred horse, the subject of his pedigree and descent, and the question of how it may be possible, by judicious crossing and mating, to still further improve the race, are of absorbing interest. There can be no doubt that just as we see in our own history that certain families have in the past developed certain qualities of bodily and mental vigour, which have brought them to the front, and kept them there, so if we carefully study the records of the thorough-bred horse we find that some strains of blood have acquired an undoubted predominance over the others, and have placed themselves in such a position of superiority that nearly all the great winners of classic races—that is to say, those horses which have shown the greatest speed, staying powers, fire, and energy—can be shown to be descended directly from them. This we can learn from "books," but to thoroughly appreciate what "breeding" and care can do for bloodstock, one must get into contact with the animals themselves, and the place to visit them is in their home; that is to say, a well-appointed stud farm.

Thanks to the courtesy of Mr. J. Musker, I have been permitted, as representing COUNTRY LIFE, to pay a visit to his model establishment at Westerham Hill. Many things are necessary for the success of a stud farm; first, of course, the capital, and determination to have the best blood that can be bought; then the vital questions of soil, water, space, and situation, and last, but not least, a "trustworthy councillor." At Westerham these are all to be found.



W. A. Rouch.

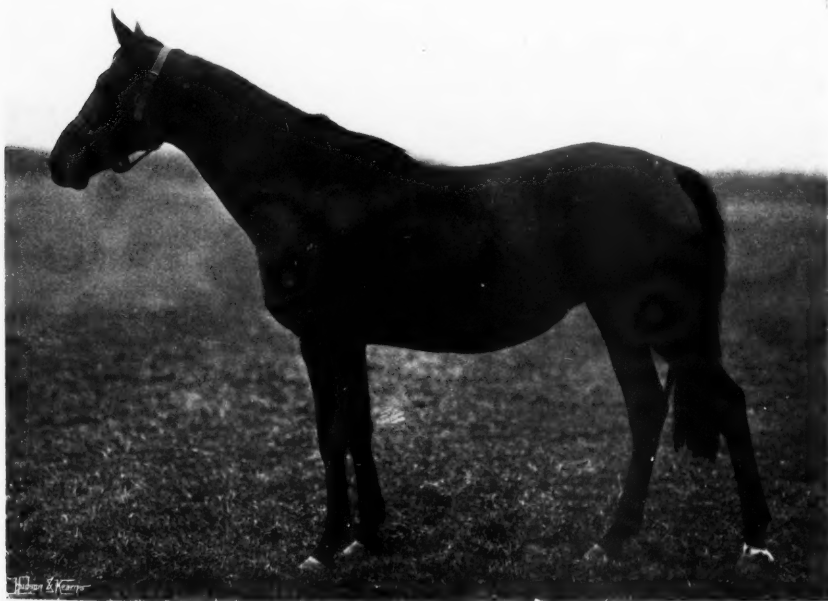
MINERA.

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There are about 400 acres of eminently suitable land lying on the slopes and summit of Westerham Hill entirely devoted to the stud buildings and paddocks; these latter are of some twenty acres each, so that there is plenty of room for the youngsters to gallop about and develop their young joints and muscles; sweet, healthy breezes sweep across the whole farm, and an ample supply of pure water is laid on from the mains to each paddock. Thus care is taken that each animal shall have the fullest and most careful attention, and the importance of pure water is known to all interested in horses. Here comes Mr. Musker's "trustworthy councillor" and right-hand man, Tom Handley, a most excellent instance of the right man in the right place, very keen, full of enthusiasm, and with all the knowledge and experience derived from many years of constant work among thorough-bred stock; it is something more than a pleasure to be taken round under his able guidance.

Ladies first, always, and so we pay our first visits to some of the stately, high-bred matrons of the stud, and I wish some of those who decry the modern thorough-bred as a weedy animal, light of bone and substance, would just see some of the Westerham mares. Here is Minera, by Hermit out of Nydia, dam of Toddington, and in foal to Melton, a great, slashing mare, with strong and beautifully-placed shoulders, and lots of bone. What a good-looking lady she is, and what an excellent photograph of her Mr. Rouch has given us!

Simena, by St. Simon out of Flying Footstep; there is a ring of romance about her breeding. What were those "flying footsteps"? Did they echo down a lonely corridor



W. A. Rouch.

SCHOOLBOOK.

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in some haunted mansion? Were they the tap, tap, tap of the little feet coming twinkling over the old oaken hall, that have set some hearts beating a trifle more quickly than usual? Be they whatever they may have been, Simena is indeed a pearl of great price. Three such sons to produce in succession—Chevening, who so nearly beat our King's Derby winner, Diamond Jubilee, for the rich Newmarket Stakes, was the result of her alliance with Orion; then to Melton she presented William Rufus, winner of over £5,000 in stake-money alone, over all sorts of courses and distances, and with every probability of materially increasing this amount before many months are over; and now once more to Melton has she given another son, Henry the First. If looks, performances, and breeding go for anything, and if no bad luck befalls him, I think Simena's son will follow in the footsteps ("flying footsteps") of his illustrious father and take the Blue Riband of the Turf to Westerham Hill. In the case of such a performer as this young Henry the First it may be of interest to look into his pedigree, and so I give it here, and would like to draw attention to the inbreeding—the close inbreeding—from the two full sisters Violet and Feronia; he is also inbred in tail male to the family from which he comes:

HENRY THE FIRST	MELTON	Lord Ronald	(Stockwell	(The Baron
			(Edith	(Pocahontas
			(Plum Pudding	(Newminster
		Silk	(Judy Go	(Diodamia
			(Lord of the Isles	(Sweetmeat
			(Miss Ann	(Foinnulla
	Violet Melrose	Scottish Chief	(Thormanby	(Duke of Algiers
			(Woodbine	(Cacique
			(Vedette	(Touchstone
		Violet	(Flying Duchess	(Fair Helen
			(King Tom	(Little Known
			(Adeline	(Bay Missy
SIMENA	St. Simon	Galopin	(Harkaway	(Windhound
			(Pocahontas	(Alice Hawthorn
			(Ion	(Stockwell
		St. Angela	(Little Fairy	(Honeysuckle
			(The Baron	(Voltiguer
			(Pocahontas	(Mrs. Ridgway
	Flying Footstep	Doncaster	(Teddington	(Flying Dutchman
			(Sister to Singapore	(Merope
			(Vedette	(Harkaway
		Atalanta	(Flying Duchess	(Pocahontas
			(Thormanby	(Ion
			(Woodbine	(Little Fairy



W. A. Rouch.

SIMENA.

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Another purchase on the same day which saw Simena pass into Mr. Musker's possession is Schoolbook, by Wisdom out of Satchel, by Galopin. A beautiful mare is this, very short legged, with great reach and rein, plenty of quality, and a member of the number 3 family (Bruce Lowe's system). If Schoolbook does no more, she has earned a claim to fame by becoming the dam of Princess Melton; that she will do much more there is no doubt. But Princess Melton was better than is generally known to the public, and I do not think I shall be betraying a secret if I say that Princess Melton and Britannia, who afterwards won the Brocklesby, were tried at 9lb. with Oria, winner of several races, and who was then in winning form. After a very bad beginning, Princess Melton got to work, and won the trial by a head. *Apropos* of these two beautiful mares, Simena and Schoolbook, it may be of interest to note that they were both bargains—dead bargains. Tom Handley had authority to spend 2,000 guineas. He got Simena for 800 guineas—how *did* he do it?—and then, when Schoolbook came up, so intent was he on watching Mr. Tattersall and an opposing bidder that really without quite meaning it he went to 1,500 guineas, at which price Schoolbook was knocked down to him; and Mr. Musker for 2,300 guineas became the possessor of two mares which, I feel sure, 10,000 guineas would not buy to-day. There is now at Westerham a young son of Schoolbook by Melton—a bay colt, own brother to Princess Melton—with the most wonderful back and loins, strong, beautifully-placed shoulders, great bone and power, combined with "quality" all over, a worthy son of his father. "Very like what Henry the First was, but perhaps a little bigger," says Mr. Handley. Coming from such an authority, that means a good deal. At all events, happy is the stud that holds such another colt.

La Rosée is not far off—a lovely short-backed sort, with fine length and flowing lines. She is by Royal Hampton out of Dewdrop. Just out of training, and about to join the matrons of the stud, is Baroness La Flèche, by Ladas out of La Flèche. This young aristocrat fetched nearly as much at auction as did her famous dam, the former going for 5,250 guineas and the latter for 5,500 guineas. A marvel of symmetry and a regular galloping machine to look at, arms and thighs let down to an astonishing extent, no wonder that when she was well she could "fly." She, too, was a victim to the hard ground, and got so shaken and sore that she never showed her true form; but there is no doubt she will redeem the past by her future stud successes. Then come two fine St. Simon mares, the first being La Idéale, by St. Simon out of Lady Primrose, full of St. Simon quality, and exceptionally big and roomy for a St. Simon mare. She is in foal to Melton. The other is La Force, a very fine mare, and in foal to



W. A. Rouch.

LA ROSEE.

Copyright

Jaquemart. A beautiful mare to look at, and a wonderfully bred one to boot, is Lovely Morn, by St. Simon out of Bonnie Morn; she cost 5,300 guineas as a yearling, but as yet has done nothing to contribute to her cost. In quick succession come Glue, by Isinglass, in foal to Melton; Palmira, bred in Italy, by Melton, and winner of the Italian St. Leger, now in foal to Merman; Princess Melton herself, all class and quality, and in foal to Chevening, out of Dunover, dam of Hercules, who, if I remember rightly, fetched some 8,000 guineas as a two year old at Mr. Musker's famous sale, then went to Germany, and is now standing at P. Lowe's stable at Ilsley; La Petite Duchesse, full of the old blood which Mr. Graham was so fond of, and which, perhaps, he stuck to too long and too closely at Yardley; Silver Sea, the dam of Lord Bobs, and in foal to Melton. These are a few of the splendid mares at Westerham, and these alone are worth going a long journey to see. But the youngsters are waiting, and so we walk off across the paddocks, past the place where Henry the First used to take his canters, past the men's

billiard and amusement rooms—and we note on the way the perfect order, neatness, and cleanliness that prevail—till we reach the first range of boxes devoted to the yearlings. A bit on the small side, but very "classy," is the filly by Orion out of Arrowroot. Next to her is a daughter of Melton out of Fledgling, a beautiful bay filly, a late foal, born on April 28th, and, consequently, wanting time to develop. She has first-rate arms, stifles, and quarters, is very compact, with plenty of rein, and is full of class. I shall be much disappointed if this young lady does not do battle with

his looks, is the colt by Jaquemart out of Mods, who, by the way, is by Wisdom out of a sister to Donovan. With great knees and joints, fine back and quarters, this colt looks like being very sharp and coming to hand early.

A bay filly, quite a good sort, by Chevening out of Marguerite (a fine Galopin mare), is another instance of the sort of stock that young sire Chevening is getting, and going to get, and a rare chance it is for those with suitable mares to avail themselves of his services at the nominal fee he now stands at.

I do not think it will be long before a much higher payment will have to be given for his "stud" fees. Close at hand is yet another Chevening, out of Irene; this will certainly be a winner of races, and is hard to find fault with. The door of another box is opened, and I at once break the Tenth Commandment, for this bay filly by Melton out of Glue is, if not the best, at all events very nearly the best I have ever seen—size, quality, power, the most beautifully placed shoulders; where do these shoulders end? A race-horse of the very highest class is this fair daughter of Melton.



W. A. Rouch.

MELTON.

Copyright

Melton? Well, here he is. Twenty years old! He looks ten or twelve. No trace of the "bowed sinew" that was the source of so much anxiety to his trainer years ago. Just as Mr. Rouch's beautiful picture shows him, so he stands. Can one say more? Look at him, that's all—and then thank Mr. Musker for the service he has done his country by bringing back Melton from Italy. Independently of what Melton has done and is doing at the stud, I should like to draw the attention of breeders to the value of Melton mares. During the last



W. A. Rouch.

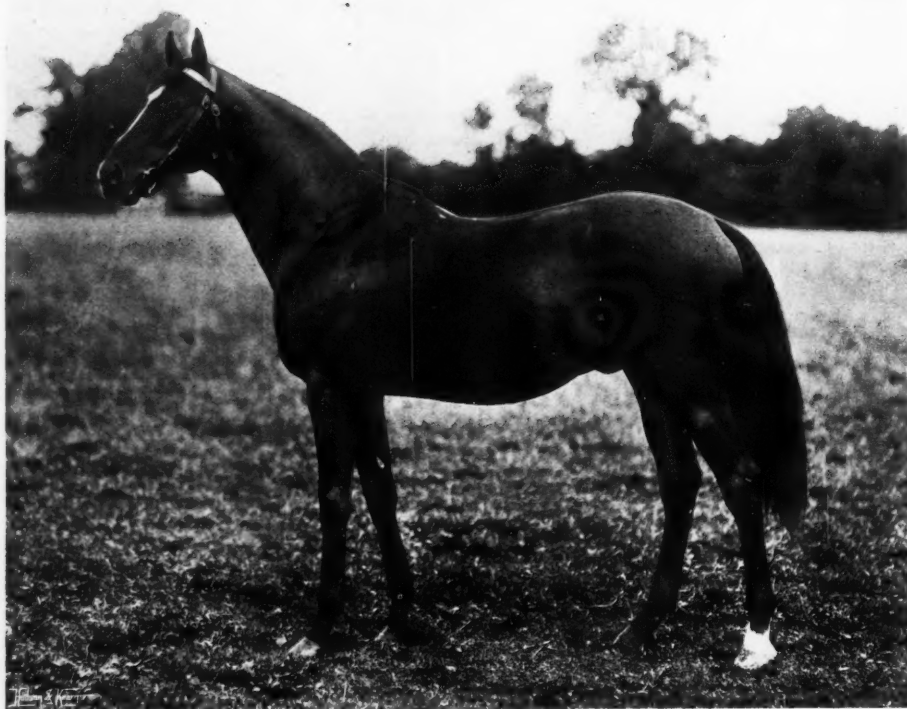
PROMISING JAQUEMART FOALS NOW YEARLINGS.

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the best of them one of these days. Chevening is getting some excellent stock, and a proof of this is to be found in the next box in the shape of a bay filly by him out of Palmira. Great depth of girth and powerful quarters are her chief characteristics. Now we come to a chestnut daughter of Melton and Dunover. Of this youngster we shall, I think, hear much in the future. She shows great quality and power, is very level, stands quite true and evenly balanced, has remarkably short cannon bones, and, in fact, is a race-horse. So, too, if he does not belie

two seasons on the flat alone, over fifty races have been won by the produce of these mares, amounting in the aggregate to over £21,000 in value. There are two Oaks winners—Our Lassie and La Roche—who can claim Melton as their maternal sire.

Another instance of Mr. Musker's enterprise is his purchase of Flying Lemur, own brother to Flying Fox. This horse is at present at the Cobham Stud. He was a high-class race-horse himself, winning the Ascot Derby, and splitting Sceptre and Rising Glass in the St. James's Palace Stakes. He strained a



W. A. Rouch.

JAQUEMART.

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back tendon in the heavy going at Kingsclere, which put an end to what promised to be a brilliant four year old career. Breeders would do well to note that as M. Blanc, the owner of Flying Fox, has decided to place all public nominations to Flying Fox in this country, there is every probability that there will be many winners by this horse running in England. It is, therefore, not to be doubted that his own brother, Flying Lemur, will always be fashionable, and that his services will be in great demand.

Orion and Jaquemart are standing at the Aislaby Stud, Stetchworth, Newmarket, which is owned by the Messrs. R. and F. P. Harrison, who, by the way, are firm believers in giving their thorough-bred stock ample room to play about in, and in keeping their paddocks fresh and sweet, changing their occupants from horses to cattle and *vice versa*, and a most excellent plan it is.

Jaquemart is a most promising young sire; a good foal getter, he has already sired some winners, amongst them Melodious and Irritant, and has, I think, sixteen two year olds to represent him this season. Orion, by Bend Or (that famous winner of a most sensational Derby) out of Shotover, an almost equally famous mare, has got so many good winners—some of whom have got and are getting good stock in their turn, Chevening, for instance—that his value as a stallion is quite beyond doubt.

T. H. B.

Mr. TEGETMEIER ON PHEASANTS.

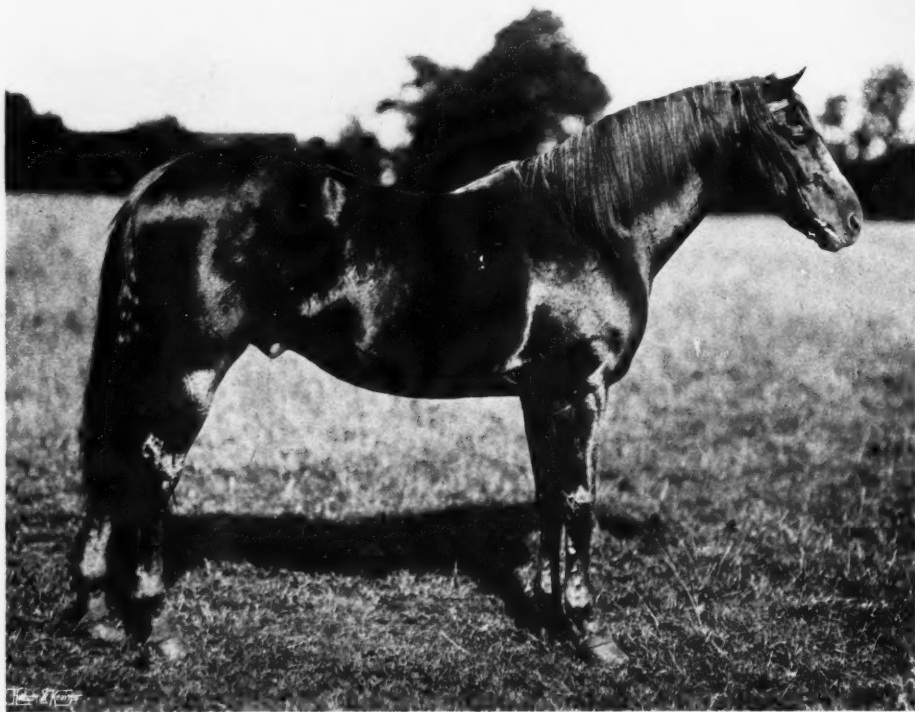
FOURTH edition of Mr. Tegetmeier's monograph on pheasants appears at an opportune time, now that owners of coverts are looking forward to the rearing season. The author was one of the first to apply to pheasant rearing and management the practical experience of breeders of fowls, turkeys, and other domesticated varieties of the same order, which suffer from the same diseases, and require in a great measure the same conditions for general health, and the debt which sportsmen owe to this genial and veteran ally is acknowledged by all. The reader will not find in this edition any further hints as to dealing with the

severer forms of disease, because time has only confirmed the impression that enteritis, necrosis, and the "cramp," which is a disintegration of the substance of the leg bones, due possibly to a virulent form of tuberculosis, are incurable, and violently contagious. The severe cold or catarrh which young pheasants suffer from in cold wet seasons like last summer is more amenable to treatment, warmth, dry shelter (if these can be given), and stimulating food, such as most good keepers know the secret of, being often remedial. Bread soaked in ale is recommended by Mr. Tegetmeier. It sounds rather empiric; it is very likely a stimulant for the time, but it needs to be given in moderation. We remember to have seen some chickens thus treated in France, the result being that the energetic little henwife who managed the poultry-yard rushed in in great excitement, exclaiming, "Tous les poulets sont possédés du diable!"

Among the improvements in the present edition are a series of six coloured plates of different species, a much more up-to-date treatment of the subject of making pens, some details of recent experiments in breeding the Prince of Wales's pheasant, and notes as to the danger accruing to game from poultry farms, or running poultry on the same ground.

It also contains some useful hints on the transport of pheasants from abroad, though these are of very ancient date, being from the pen of the late Mr. Bartlett the elder. It would be very useful if in any future edition some means of getting into touch with the collectors in the Far East could be suggested. It is of very little use to advocate new species for coverts if the means of procuring them are not indicated. At the same time, no one, so far as we know, has suggested what these means are, except in the fact, noted by Walter Rothschild, that Mr. Hagenbeck of Hamburg obtained a good number of the true Mongolian pheasants for him, *i.e.*, the large bird with a broad interrupted ring round its throat, and white shoulder coverts.

In regard to these Mongolians, a letter of Mr. Rothschild's to the *Field* is quoted, which appeared in June, 1903: "I have had a number of the true Mongolian pheasants alive at Tring for two or three years, and have had a number of young, both



W. A. Rouch.

WESTERHAM HILL STUD: ORION.

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pure and half-bred, hatched and reared in our coverts, and those which were shot proved superior in flavour and size to ordinary pheasants. Cock birds hatched in June were as full plumaged and weighed as much as two year old common pheasants!"

A very interesting account is given of the success of Colonel Marsden Sunderland in rearing that beautiful species, the Prince of Wales's pheasant. The bird is very abundant in the marshes and reeds fringing the Murghab river in North Afghanistan. The wing coverts are white, as in the Mongolian, but it has no ring round its neck. The plumage is beautifully "spangled with bright purplish black on a rich golden red ground." Colonel Sunderland writes of the bird: "In 1901 I read in Mr. Tegetmeier's work on pheasants that the Prince of Wales's pheasant would be a welcome addition to British coverts. I therefore determined to try to introduce this beautiful bird into Europe. I first tried the importation of the eggs, but this proved a dismal and costly failure. In the autumn 1902 I went to the East, and succeeded in securing several birds. No one could positively inform me whether this species of pheasant was polygamous or not, so I brought to England an equal number of cocks and hens—a useless precaution, for the cocks fought for the hens in the usual manner.

"The birds stood the long journey very well, and were turned down into large enclosures in Hampshire at the end of February, 1903. They did not begin to lay till the end of April, but laid then very freely, averaging in one pen over thirty eggs to a hen. Virtually all the eggs proved fertile. They hatched extremely well, and the strong chicks proved fully as easy to rear as those from the ordinary pheasants. They were fed on custard, oatmeal, etc., as recommended by Mr. Tegetmeier. They were brought up in fields of standing corn and buckwheat, surrounded by wire fences 10ft. high, and the farmyard hens employed as foster-mothers were left at large in these fields. The birds were pinioned when five days old. I wanted them to be able to fly a little, and severed the wing joint with scissors, so as to leave them two flight feathers. This has proved a costly blunder, for with only these two flight feathers the birds could fly over the roof of wire with the greatest ease. It was quite a business to catch them when in October I moved into Sussex, and, indeed, I left several birds in the woods of Conholt Park." Colonel Sunderland carried out this successful experiment on a very thorough scale. Each pen consists of several acres of wood, pasture, and arable ground, which will be sown with corn and buckwheat, and only five hens and one (unrelated) cock run to the acre. The birds are extremely fond of the flowers of the common charlock."

There seems every chance that Colonel Sunderland's valuable enterprise will give us a new game bird. Mr. Tegetmeier has no fresh news of the monaul pheasant in England, or of Reeves' pheasant; neither does he note the general impression that, however splendid, the latter is not a good flyer, and drives away other pheasants. The question of what ought to be the cost of rearing

pheasants is given up as hopeless, estimates varying from 1s. to 15s. per bird! Before long this question will probably be worked out satisfactorily for average shootings.

The pen question is now much before owners of pheasant coverts. Mr. Tegetmeier is evidently a convert to the "wicker hurdle" method. It will be found described both here and in the COUNTRY LIFE volume on shooting. The advantage is that the wicker hurdles are cheap, effective, and removable, so that the pen can be shifted with little cost or trouble. Common wattle hurdles 7ft. long and set up on end are in ordinary use. They make the sides, and we ourselves prefer the top to be of ordinary fishing net, carefully fastened and spread



A. Horsley Hinton.

A YORKSHIRE GLEN.

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over narrow battens of wood, or over good strong lengths of tarred rope fastened to the frame of fir or deal to which the hurdles are attached. Then the birds need not be pinioned or "brailed."

The six coloured plates in the volume are a very creditable attempt to show the splendours of pheasants' plumage. They even succeed to some extent in giving the effect of iridescence. But each and all are too light in tints and wanting in depth of tone in the dark parts, except that of the Reeves' pheasant. The ordinary Chinese and common pheasants scarcely needed illustration. Coloured plates of the monaul as it appears in flight, and of some of the other Himalayan pheasants suitable for introduction, would be a great addition to the work.



AN interesting old house is the picturesque gabled structure which stands a little to the south-east of Godstone Church, in that quaint village in the very heart of Surrey. Godstone, as many know, lies upon the road from Croydon, which, after passing through the pleasant Caterham Valley, enters other attractive scenery on the way to East Grinstead. Leigh Place is in goodly company there, for many fine seats and interesting homes are in the vicinity—Tandridge Court, Titsey Place, Rook's Nest, Marden Park, and others—while Godstone itself is one of the



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THE LANE BY THE ALMSHOUSES.

"C.L."

picturesque lane leads away, over-shadowed by trees and ivy, which is a favourite haunt of artists. There are also very

prettiest villages in all Surrey. It possesses a large green, about which it is built, with fine horse-chestnuts for its adornment, and a footpath conducts the visitor by the side of a pond, well known to anglers, to the ancient church. There are Norman and Early English features in the venerable edifice, which was well restored by Sir Gilbert Scott, and many things therein are well deserving of note. The churchyard commands a striking view of a combe and heathy hill-side to the south, while a



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THE ENTRANCE DRIVE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



THE SOUTH FRONT.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

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THE LAKE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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TERRACE AND CROQUET LAWN.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

quaint almshouses near the church, erected by the late Mrs. Hunt of Wotton House, from designs by Sir Gilbert Scott. How quaint they are, in their old English character, the pictures will show.

Within the church may be seen, in the north chancel, a magnificent altar tomb of black and white marble, with effigies of Sir John Evelyn and his wife Thomasine. Sir John dwelt at Leigh Place, which adjoins the church, and the house should ever be dear to those who love country life and the beauties of English gardens, because it was anciently the residence of kinsmen of John Evelyn the diarist, who often visited them within its walls.

Godstone is a very ancient place, and on Castle Hill, adjoining the Evelyns' house, may still be seen an old fortification, with a ditch and a bank, and a well dedicated to Diana, though why "the nymph of the grot" should be honoured on that spot no one appears to know. Godstone was once called Wacheleste or Walhamstead, and belonged to Richard de Lucy, afterwards passing through the hands of the St. Johns, of whom one Roger died in 1353. The Godstone estate then came through female heirs to the families of Gage and Chamberleyne, and in the time of Henry VIII. belonged to Sir David Owen. In 1589 the manors of Marden and Walhamstead, "*alias* Godstone," with the capital messuage of Leigh Place in the latter, were purchased, for the sum of £3,100, by George Evelyn of Long Ditton, who was also the purchaser of the famous house of Wotton, in which he died in 1603. He had no fewer than sixteen sons, and by his second wife was grandfather of the famous John Evelyn—"Sylva"—of Sayes Court, Deptford.

The Evelyns of Godstone were descended from his first wife, the heiress of Sir John Williams, Knight, and the grandson who lived at Leigh Place was Sir John Evelyn, M.P. for what Cobbett afterwards described as "the vile rotten borough of Bletchingley," disfranchised by the first reformers, when its electors had dwindled to ten or twelve. Lord Palmerston was one of its latest representatives. Sir John Evelyn was knighted before 1637, but, in the Civil War, he joined the opponents of the King, and as a member of Parliament was employed with others to present an address to His Majesty for peace in 1642. His subsequent conduct excited the suspicion of his colleagues, and he was charged with treachery and committed to prison, but was released.

Godstone passed to the eldest son of this possessor, Sir John Evelyn of Leigh Place, created a baronet in 1660, who left no direct heir to succeed him. It is interesting to read in Evelyn's diary how he visited his kinsmen at Godstone. In July, 1649, he met two other John Evelyns there—Sir John, his host, and Sir John of Wilts—and he remarked the "prodigious memory" of the daughter of the

latter. In August, 1658, he again visited Leigh Place. "Went to Sir John Evelyn's, at Godstone. The place is excellent, but might be improved by turning some of the offices of the house and removing the garden; the house being a noble fabric, but not comparable to what was first built by my uncle, who was master of all the powder mills." Having known Sir John Evelyn well in his lifetime, the diarist went, in October, 1673, to see the place in the church where he lay—"Old Sir John Evelyn's dormitory, joining the church, paved with marble, where he and his lady lie in a very stately monument at length, he in armour of white marble." When Sir John Evelyn, Bart., died the manor and lands at Godstone passed, in pursuance of his father's settlement, to his brother George, who died in 1696. The estate was then held in succession by three of the latter's sons, the last of whom, finding it too much

encumbered, procured an Act of Parliament in 1734 vesting it in trustees for sale. The purchaser was Charles Boone, Esq., whose son and heir, Daniel, married a niece of Edward Evelyn, but Daniel, in 1759, sold the manor and other possessions to Sir Kenrick Clayton. Leigh Place descended to that gentleman's son, Sir Robert Clayton, who in his lifetime gave the pond and lands in Godstone to Mr. Græme, his steward. When Sir Robert died, in 1799, the manor and estate passed to his cousin, Sir William Clayton, and it continued in the family of the Claytons of Marden Park. It may be interesting to note that the manor at the latter place, which appertains to Godstone, was sold by Sir John Evelyn to the loyal Sir Robert Clayton in 1677. Leigh Place afterwards became the property of C. H. Turner, Esq., of Rook's Nest, in the adjoining parish of Tandridge. It was placed by him in a state of repair, and in Mrs. Brooksbank's hands it is maintained as a place of such interesting memories well deserves to be.

The house has, of course, gone through many changes since the Evelyns' time, and now we shall say of it that it is

a very attractive and picturesque English home. There are gardens about it of simple and natural charm, well befitting it.

On one side a beautiful drive between broad expanses of turf and bright flower-beds, with fine trees in the immediate vicinity, forms the approach. On the south a terrace runs along the front of the house, gay with an abundance of summer flowers, which, not content with the beds in which they grow, cling to the walls that neighbour them, and make the walk a pleasant one to linger upon, and from which to look out over the sunken croquet lawn below and over all that radiant gardenage.

There is freshness in the idea of forming the stairways by which we descend from the trunks of trees—a method employed in many of our well-tended English woodlands. A broad lake lies in the lower lands, margined by fine trees, and



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A FLOWERY ASCENT.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

with pleasant walks for the enjoyment of those privileged to linger thereby. Then an ascent through a world of flowers brings the visitor back again; and he leaves Leigh Place remembering well its beauties, and linking them with the fame of old John Evelyn.

IN THE GARDEN AT HOLKHAM.

HOLKHAM is well known to the readers of *COUNTRY LIFE*, who are interested in it as a great centre of agriculture and sport. It ranks among the most remarkable estates in England, owing to the fact that it was in a real sense created by a far-seeing country gentleman, who, in his time, stood in the front rank amongst promoters of English agriculture. Holkham lies three miles from Wells, in Norfolk, in a vast level park, with great and attractive gardens. The first Earl of Leicester, of the second Coke creation, who died in 1842, was long known as "Coke

barley, great droves of sheep and herds of cattle, bringing him a return of about £20,000 a year. The park has a circumference of nine miles, and includes about 3,200 acres, of which 1,000 acres are woodland. The woods were planted by the Earl, who lived to see launched at Lynn a ship built out of the timber of oaks which he himself had planted. The game is abundant, the trees are well massed, there are many magnificent specimens, and there is a great and beautiful sheet of water. As to the garden, in the design of which Sir Francis Chantrey had a share, it is broad, beautiful, and attractive, richly adorned with urns, vases, and sculptures, gay with masses of flowers, and all enframed by the beautiful woodland. Here is everything, one would think, that the heart could desire, and yet, when Kent had built the mansion for the first Earl of Leicester of the earlier creation, about 1744, he exclaimed, "It is a melancholy thing to stand alone in one's own country; I look around; not a house is to be seen but my own; I am Giant of Giant Castle, and have ate up all my neighbours." Great is the change that has passed over the estate since that time. The Earl's only son died in 1759, when the title became extinct, but the estate descended to his nephew, Mr. Wenham Roberts, who adopted the name of Coke, and in whose son, the



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ALMSHOUSES AT GODSTONE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

of Norfolk," because of the skill and knowledge which, from an open and a barren country, enabled him to develop an estate to a condition of great fertility, with abundant crops of wheat and

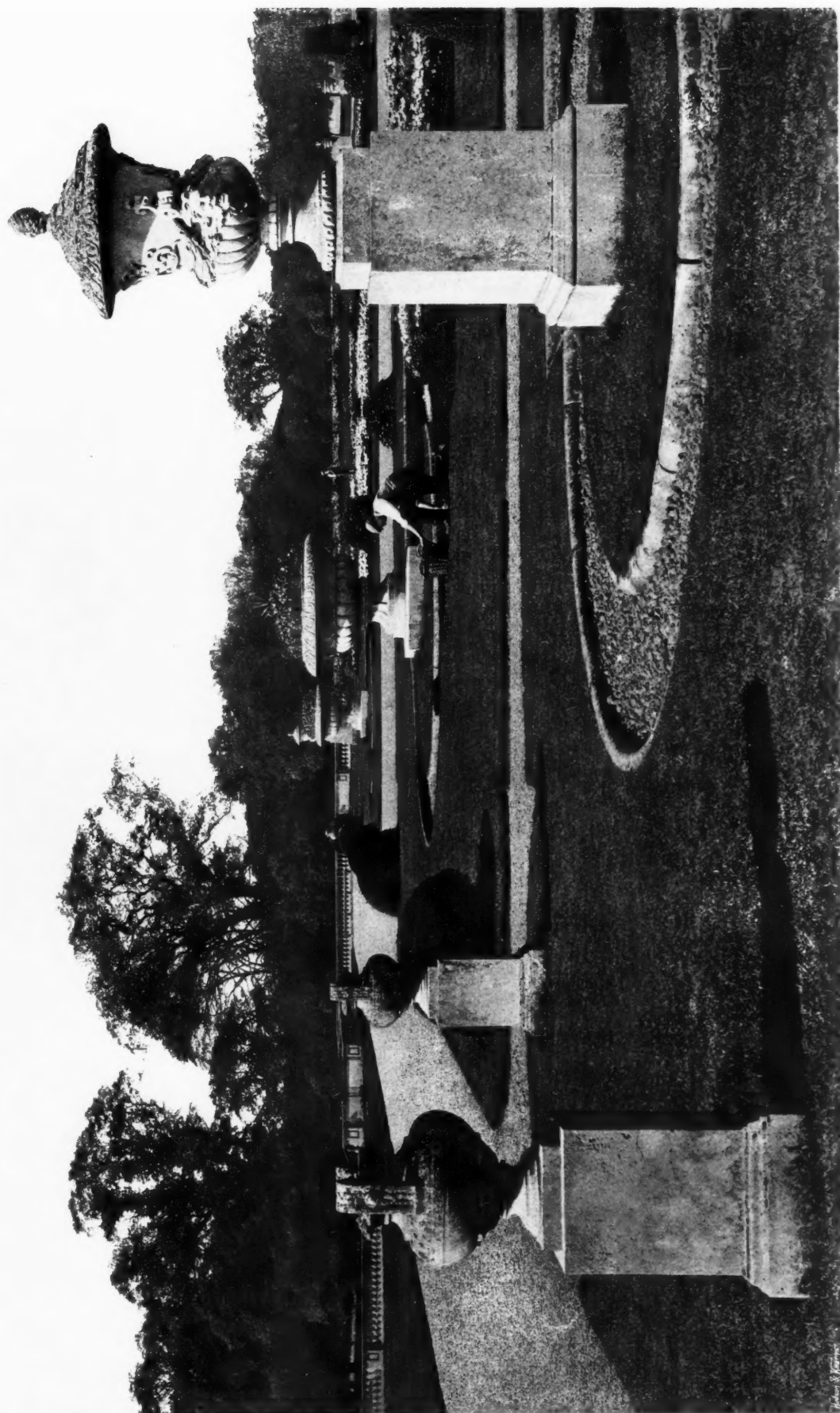
great developer of agriculture in Norfolk, the earldom was revived, in 1837—a Coronation honour conferred by Queen Victoria.

THE WORLD OF HEART'S DESIRE.

SCIENCE leaves us blindfold at the gates of death. Philosophy is no guide for the dark and lonely path that leads—ah, whither? Religion builds itself a Heaven and fashions itself a hell, and yet goes out into the unknown. All the science, all the philosophy, all the religion of the world leave us no wiser than little children in our attempts to solve the riddle of Hereafter. And who would solve it? Is it not sweeter to imagine than to see, to hope than to attain, to dream than to awaken? Every heart has the making of its own Paradise, and with no other will it be satisfied. As we imagine so shall we see, as we hope so shall we attain, as we dream so shall we awaken.

Only to the World of Heart's Desire there can come no surfeit of loveliness, no weariness of possession, no disenchantment with awaking. That which is infinite must surely be perfect, and that which is perfect—infinite, and so the perfection

of joy and the perfection of beauty are not for the carnal mind and outward eye, and are but faintly felt and imagined of the purest dreams, the most inspired vision. The mind of man cannot grasp the miracle of Eternity—the thought of For Ever. This is because the mind of man has no dream deep enough to fill so vast a space. His world is always changing; he sees the night succeed the day, the winter follow summer; he sees the roses flower and fade; he sees fair faces bloom and wither too; he seeks for Happiness, and finds it not. For what man can say "I am happy" in a world that bows to the tyranny of Time? Happiness must be an enduring state—a day to which there is no night, and no morrow. Such a day has never dawned for mortal eyes. The Garden of Eden was the nearest approach to the perfect state—that pleasant garden which the Creator sowed with Life and watered with Eternity, and in which He Himself loved to walk—and yet Eden could not satisfy the restless human heart.



"COUNTRY LIFE."

THE LAWN AND ITS ADORNMENTS AT HOLKHAM.

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It may be that this was but part of the Eternal Plan—to visit the heart of man with affliction, to bruise his feet with stones, and tear his flesh with thorns—that, wearied with the vanities and vexations of this world, he might of himself come to imagine a fairer and purer Paradise in the which he should be content to dwell for ever. But the mind of man has no dream deep enough, no thought high enough, no sense pure enough, to fill Eternity. He has never seen his Heart's Desire in the fulness of its beauty, never imagined it in the entirety of its joy; it is but an inner consciousness—a strange, sweet instinct. Is it a morning land, this fairer world, or some deep valley soft with stars and sleep? Or does the mystery of twilight wrap its dreams with fading blooms that dying, never die? Or is it some green island lost in lonely seas, whose waves are tideless?

There come moments when the heart is taken with a divine ecstasy, when it is uplifted into the infinite regions of space, when it sees into the light beyond the light, the Dawn beyond the day. It is borne on the wings of music, whose strings are as a harp touched by the fingers of Morning, whose lutes as the sighing of summer winds in old rose gardens. Or it is caught up of its own rapture, when the sun goes down beyond far wooded hills, or over deep, still waters; when the fields of Heaven are beflowered with the stars of midnight: when the air turns sweet with the first faint breath of Spring. Then the heart knoweth its desire—a desire so strong and sure, so high and holy, that the dew of dawn is not so pure, the scent of roses is not so fragrant. For one brief moment it looks into Eternity.

But the music sobs and dies, the bloom of Even fades, the little stars go out, the springtime will not tarry, and the heart comes back to earth.

But the heart has a desire beyond the dream of some still garden hid away from Time, where winter comes not and darkness is not known. Through the eyes of Love it sees further into Eternity than it has ever seen through the golden doors of Morning or the sacred windows of Sunset, and on Love's breath it touches a height that the wings of music can never reach. Is not Love high enough, broad enough, deep enough to fill Infinity? For Love comes with the dew of Heaven on her lips, and the light of life in her eyes, and her hair is twined with stars, and her garments are woven of the gladness of Spring and the Sweetness of Summer. And yet even Love faints at the shadow of The Infinite, because no man has ever imagined Love in the fulness of her stainless grace and purity. The curse of the flesh is always upon him. Happy the lips that have never met in this world, and the eyes that yearn through space, for between them lies the World of Heart's Desire. As we dream so shall we awaken. We have no thought pure enough to touch The Infinite, but sometimes at the quiet close of day, when our hands lie idle and the shadows fall, when memory quickens and the twilight fills with dreams, the heart goes out into strange sweet places.

There is a garden hung with breathless airs, and deep with sleep. Its paths lead out from still mysterious groves. A crimson gloom enfolds the enchanted trees—a strange half-light that is not of the sun, nor moon, nor stars. How sweet to wander into the forest stillness! But who is this that comes with Paradise?

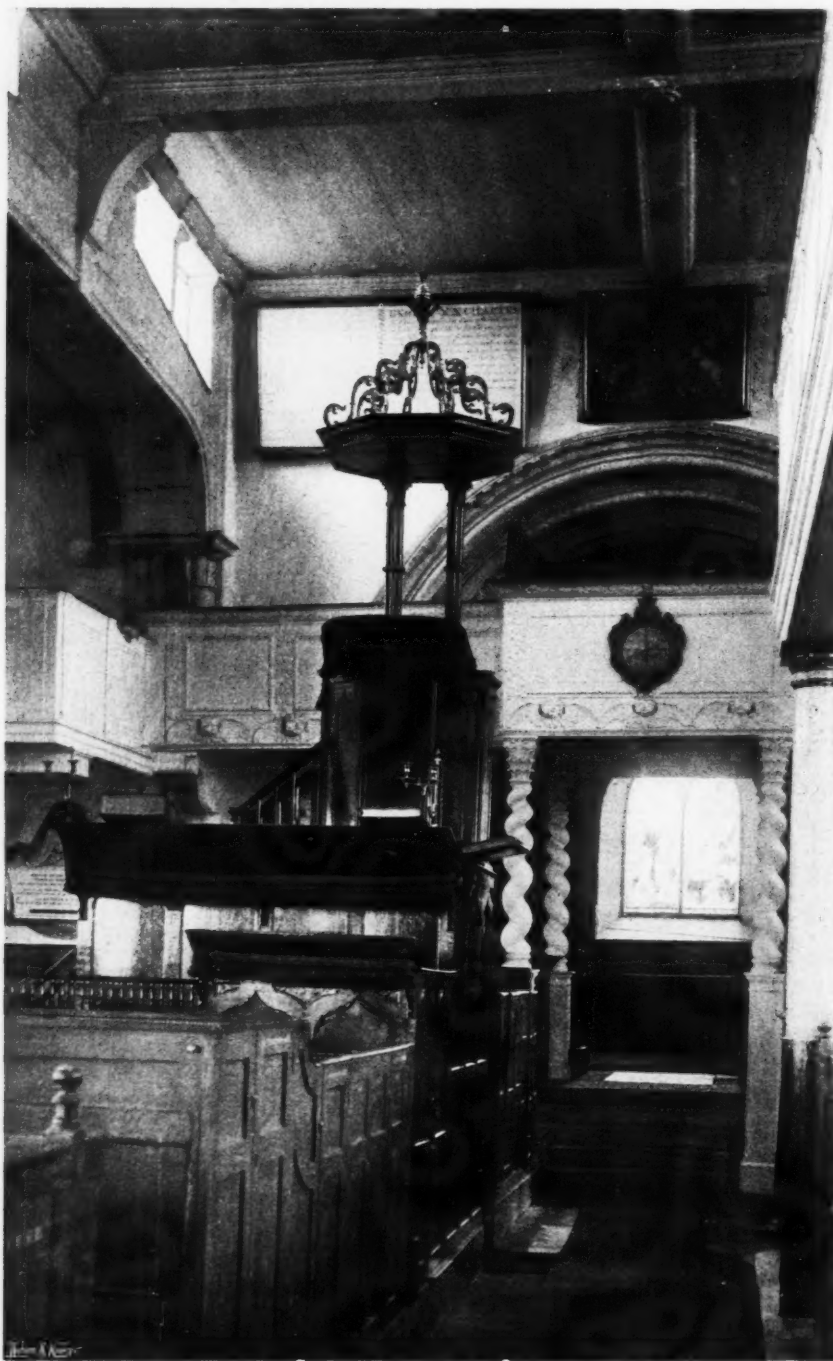
The air breathes a thousand perfumes from her presence, the silence breaks into song at her coming. She is whiter than the lilies at her feet, but her hair is a garment of glory, and she is not ashamed. For she is pure with the purity of angels, and her eyes are flowers of innocence. Youth is the crown upon her brow, and she is for ever and ever. Her voice is a concord of all sweet sounds that ear has never heard nor mind conceived. She is the incarnation of Life, and she is the Heart's Desire.

R. G. T. COVENTRY.

THE DAYS . . . OF PEWS.

UP above the old town of Whitby, and reached by a flight of 199 steps therefrom, stands the ancient parish church of St. Mary. England is full of ancient churches, and though this one was built in the Norman style, in the early twelfth century, it is not to that period that the unique interest of the place belongs. It is the interior and its fittings which make the church what it is—a wonderfully complete example of the arrangement and adaptation of a church to the ideas of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, carried out as completely as could be done, and then, most fortunately, let alone. It is exactly the kind of church in which the Vicar of Bray might have passed the long, judicious years of his incumbency, a church which Hogarth might have depicted later, and in which the congregation of the early Victorian days sat, without the slightest misgiving that there was anything odd or incongruous about their surroundings, before the era of "restoration" swept away so many of the secular and social landmarks inside the parish churches.

The characteristic mark of the church fittings of the day was the personal "note," the idea of individuals and of "property" brought into the churches. Many of the pews were freehold; they belonged to such-and-such a property or house, and were as much the belongings of the owner of the house as his table and chairs, which, by the way, he often had carried into his pew. This often led to obvious social differences and to obstruction, in some churches, of an undesirable kind. Thus, the squire and rich tradesmen might have big comfortable pews with fireplaces and curtains, while the poor old men on parish pay sat on a bare oak bench placed lengthways in



F. M. Sutcliffe.

THREE-DECKER PULPIT.

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F. M. Sutcliffe. THE COMMANDMENTS.

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the aisle. The *Times*, in a solemn article on house rent as the basis of taxation, lately remarked that "the house was the measure of the man." In the days of Queen Anne the pew was the measure of the man.

But the Whitby people seem to have determined so to fit up their church as to give everyone a fair chance, and to extend the prized privilege of a good pew to everyone in the congregation without distinction, the only person who was allowed to "go out" on a better one than other people being the squire, who had a little private staircase to his, with a roof over it, outside the church, just under a Norman cornice. "A pew for everyone and everyone his pew" being the grand principle adopted, there next came the difficulty of putting the principle into practice. But they did it thoroughly and successfully, according to their ideas and means. Pews naturally take up a great deal of room, and to obtain this they ran a gallery completely round the church and transepts, and filled this gallery up with pews as they were wanted. The result is that, as the Rev. F. M. Sutcliffe—to whom we are indebted for some of the photographs which illustrate this article, as well as for many very full notes on the structure—says: "On entering through the heavy

western door the visitor feels as though he had no right to go any further. He sees before him a wilderness of galleries and pews, and which seem so completely to belong to people long dead and forgotten, that it is only with diffidence that he ventures among them." The idea is a most natural one. In ordinary churches the tombs and inscriptions point only to the fact that those whom they commemorate are now in another world. But the pews stand like cold and empty shells

which enclosed them as habitations when worshipping week by week in this world before their spirits departed.

Such are the thoughts they conjure up to-day. But that was far from being the view of the cheerful builders and owners of the pews. The business was briskly and handsomely carried out. The pews were made uniform in shape and size on the ground floor, with sides, backs, and doors all of a height, and locks upon the doors. Many of them were 6ft. high, so that no one could see into them without standing on a hassock. In the gallery they were rather lower, and sloped up at the back, so that the inmates might see the preacher. They swept round in front of the organ, and swallowed up most of the music which came out of the pipes, while the gallery blocked the Norman

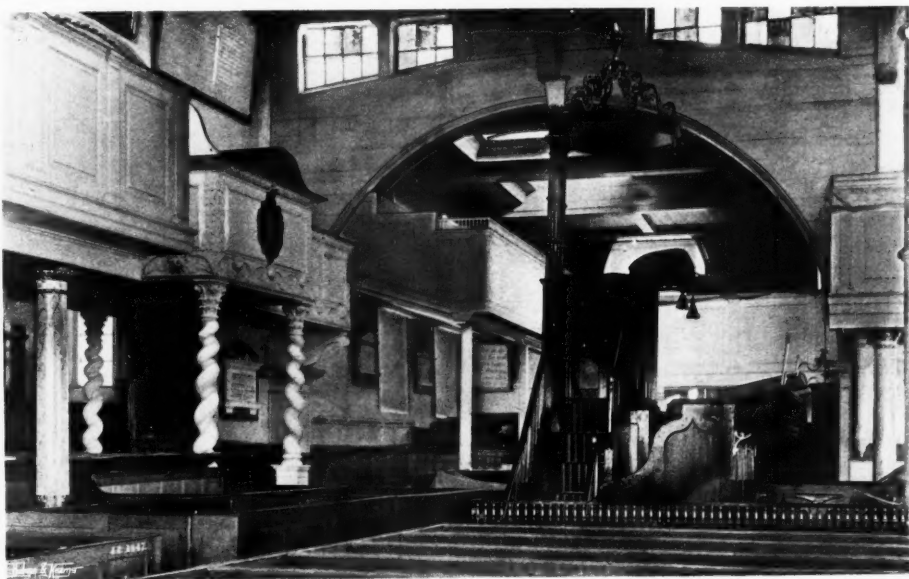


F. M. Sutcliffe. THE SQUIRE'S PEW.

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chancel arch and zigzag mouldings. Over the chancel arch sat the squire, his pew supported by four very good spiral columns, with a clock in front of it, and with heads of cherubims and festoons of fruit carved on it. Over his head, as a symbol of

the union of Church and State, was, and is, a fine royal escutcheon, with a lion and unicorn, with briskly curling tails, of the early Victorian period. On another wall hangs a much older one, bearing the arms of "The Illustrious House of Hanover," quartered with the French lilies. The other matters—not of dynasty, but of doctrine—prescribed by law are all duly in place, including the Creed and the Ten Commandments, all painted, in imitation of an excellent



F. M. Sutcliffe.

THE NAVE WITH PEWS.

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"font" of type of the period, on large and ample wooden mural tablets. Next door to the Commandments, which are at the back of one of the gallery pews, is one of the typical monuments of the period—a tomb with a pall over it, carved in white marble, with a kind of black obelisk behind it. It will be noted that all the work is very thorough and handsome of its kind. Many of the first and oldest set of pews, probably very early Reformation work (for the pew was a Puritan machine, to give "particularism" full play), have good round-headed pillars at the corners. Another and rather later set are a good 2ft. higher, and have little balustrades of pillarets along the fronts, as is seen in some old-fashioned office fittings in London. The main idea of pews being that the congregation should sit cut up into water-tight compartments where no one could see anyone else, and so become carnally minded as to hats, pretty faces, or the like, it was also most necessary that the occupants should all be able to see and be seen by the clergyman. To this end was devised the "three-decker" pulpit, with desk for the clerk, reading-desk, and pulpit, or preaching-place proper. The Whitty people did this in style, too, and evidently did their very best to make the church complete. In fact, though the whole scheme now rather suggests a smile, their thoroughness, and good sense, too, within the limits of the purpose with which they set out on their enterprise, did them great credit. The form of the pulpit is quite good, and the sounding-board even elegant. Also the cushions and fringes on the desks are very handsome and neat. One very funny, but also quite thoughtful, arrangement is found there, which to the present writer is entirely new. There is a mechanical contrivance for raising or lowering the floor of the clerk's desk, so that whether they had a tall clerk or a short one they could always see and hear him. Some of the pews are lettered on the doors with the names of outlying hamlets, such as "Hawsker-cum-Stainsacre," "Newcolin-cum-Dunsley," or "Aislaby," which Mr. Sutcliffe thinks shows that the inhabitants of these villages had rights in the parish church for generations. In old days many of the pews must have been upholstered very grandly with blue or green cloth and brass-headed nails. Others are only painted, white or pale blue for preference, but some are "marbled," a triumph of art. If there is not a lock on the door there is at least a latch, and also the owner's name. It must be added that the inside of the vestry is quite as interesting as the church. It looks like a ship's cabin rather, with old chairs, and a table as old as the pews, an ancient pair of bellows, and an old mirror in



F. M. Sutcliffe.

THE NAVE AND PULPIT.

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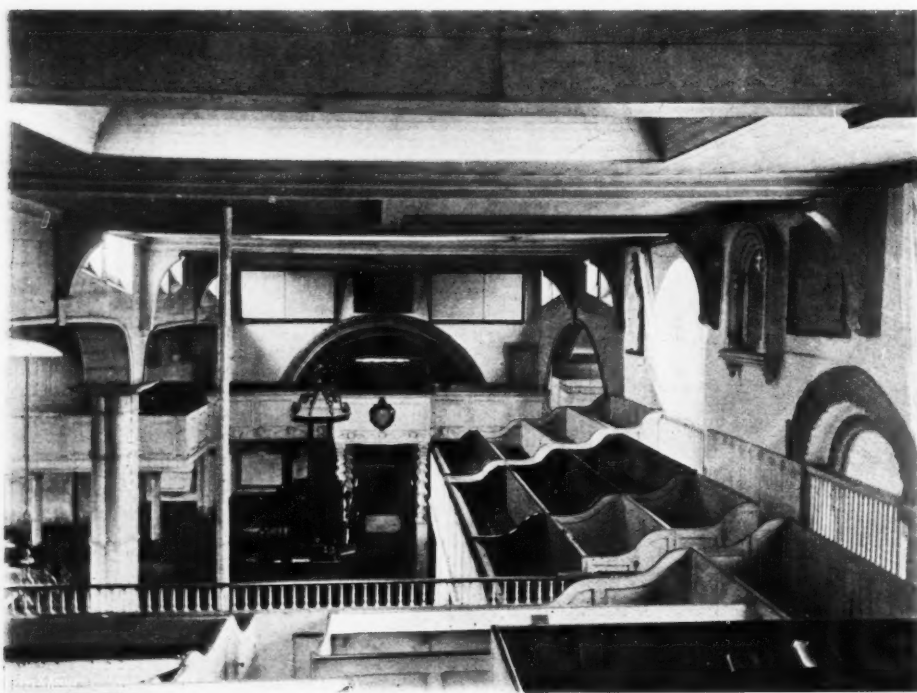
which the parsons of the pew-building era looked while they set their wigs and bands straight after climbing up from the town in a north-easterly gale. We are much indebted to Mr. Sutcliffe for his full and interesting notes on this unique old church.

C. J. CORNISH.

IN THE GARDEN.

THE DWARF POLYANTHA ROSES.

IN the desire to grow as many tea-scented Roses as possible, some groups of Roses are forgotten, and one of these is the Polyantha. We have planted them in masses with the happiest effect, and they give just that mound of blossom we rejoice in as summer merges into autumn; they are useful as edgings to beds filled with hardy flowers, but in small gardens they may fill the beds themselves, and Pansies or some low-growing plant are useful between them. A note from a Rosarian before us says: "A bed of standards or half-standards of the large-flowering Roses could have no better edging than, say, of Gloire des Polyanthas (pink), or of Anna M. de Montravel (white). Perle des Rouges (velvety crimson) would be a good edging to a bed of delicate-coloured standard Tea Roses, and the exquisite Perle d'Or, as yet unrivalled, would look well round a mass of crimson. I do not think anything is gained by allowing these Polyantha Roses to grow tall, which they undoubtedly will do unless checked. No better plan can be adopted than to severely prune each year. By cutting them down to the ground a more uniform growth is obtained. If the plants become too dense, they may be easily thinned. Has anyone tried these Roses with a carpeting of Pansies? They form beautiful combinations, and, being very free and long flowering, they are just the plants that are wanted for certain positions. A border of these Roses, comprising all the known sorts, would also be an interesting feature where Roses are made much of. There are now fifty or more varieties, and these could be divided into three groups, according to their height. If a space of 2ft. apart each way were allowed, this would leave ample room for the Pansies." While writing of these Roses, it may be mentioned that the name is misleading. We associate the word Polyantha with the vigorous climber of that name, a Rose that is quite the opposite to the little bunchy plants that make brave masses of colour in autumn. Miss Jekyll, in her book, "Roses for English Gardens," page 25, thinks the better name would be "Pompon" Roses. "It is a French word denoting any kind of upholstered ornament of a roundish, tufted form. The name has been excellently applied to the small-bloomed Chrysanthemums, whose flowers are about an inch across, and that look like close tufts of petals. Just what Pompon Chrysanthemums are to the other kinds, so are the Pompon Roses to their larger fellows. . . . They are charming plants for any small spaces. They are commonly used as edges to beds of larger Roses, but it is doubtful whether they are not best by themselves in small beds; never in large beds, for here the sense of proportion is at once offended." The most distinct and beautiful of this group are the following, and remember that they are all quite dwarf: Anna Marie de Montravel, one of the best of all, with quite imbricated flowers, which cover the growth in a mantle



F. M. Sutcliffe.

FAMILY PEWS.

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of snowy white; Clothilde Soupert, a somewhat large flower for its section, but the colouring is very pleasing, the outer petals being white, with rosy centre, but from our experience the colouring is not very certain; Etoile d'Or, lemon colour and sulphur; Eugénie Lamesch, quite distinct, the buds reddish copper in colour, but when the flowers expand this gives place to clear yellow; Georges Pernet, rosy yellow, passing with age to a peach shade, and the flowers are large; Gloire des Polyanthas, one of the most charming of the whole set—the flowers are bright rose in colour, with white centre, and they are produced in rich profusion; Mignonette, a very pretty rose, the colour delicate rose changing to white—its flowers appear in clusters; and Perle d'Or, which, though last on the list, is by no means least. It is a beautiful variety, nankeen yellow in colour, and deepening to orange in the centre; it is a tiny flower, but has a certain strength of petal that prevents damage from stormy weather. This is, of course, a small selection, as the section comprises, as mentioned, about fifty varieties, but the beginner is wise to restrict his choice to those Roses of proved worth.

PLUM, ALMOND, AND OTHER FLOWERS IN THE GREENHOUSE
(CONTINUED).

Coryopsis spicata.—Imagine a little Hazel Bush, and some idea is obtained of this beautiful plant. The flowers are very sweet smelling, a decided yellow in colour, and almost hide the stems. Only sufficient protection from frost is needed to gain a wealth of bloom, as hard forcing results in absolute failure.

Deutzias and Forsythias.—These are a sheet anchor to those who "garden" under glass, and *D. gracilis* is grown in thousands for early flowering, and they give little trouble. The same remarks apply to the Forsythias, which will flower with great freedom in February, a month before they open in the garden. The best for the purpose is *F. suspensa*, which is a climber, but when the main shoots are attached to a strong stake, the smaller growths hang about in a free way, and the result is a fountain of golden bloom. When flowering is over, cut the shoots hard back, leaving only one or two buds, which will provide the flowering-stems for the following year. In this way the same plants will bloom year after year.

Hydrangeas are, of course, excellent shrubs for the greenhouse, but they are too well known to describe.

Laburnum.—How pleasant it is to see the yellow trails of the Laburnum long before we welcome it outdoors! The flowers remind us of the spring that is coming or supposed to come, and a few standards give pleasure when the wind whistles through the bare branches and snow heaps still linger. The ordinary Laburnum is best for under glass, but there is the long-racemed *Watererii*, which is a relief to the other. Writing of yellow flowers reminds us of the brightness of the Double Jew's Mallow or *Kerria*. It is quite acceptable when grown in pots.

Magnolias, though big shrubs, and sometimes trees, are welcome in the greenhouse, especially the venturesome *M. stellata*, which we consider the prettiest of the family. Its flowers are like large white stars, and cover the shrub with a mantle of bloom, white as a snowdrift. There is a rosy form of it, but we prefer the white. In the course of time this shrub, like other Magnolias, develops greatly, and can then be planted permanently in the open garden. We should begin first with this, and others, such as *conspicua*, *parviflora*, and *Watsoni*, can be added later.

Tree Peonies.—These must be regarded quite as shrubs for the greenhouse. The varieties are superb, and include both single and double, the broad flaunting petals coloured

with shades as subtle as those of the Roses in September. In many gardens the greenhouse is filled with Peonies in early spring, and we think this flower, though naturally large, has lost none of its splendour through a desire to increase its dimensions. They must not be forced in the ordinary acceptance of the word, but merely encouraged to bloom with a little warmth.

Pyrus.—In the smallest collection there should be a plant or two of the lovely *P. Malus floribunda*. It is a tree of rare grace and charm, and in pots is quite as cheerful, the flowers losing little of their natural colouring, being darkest in the variety *atrosanguinea*. The well-known *P. japonica* and *P. Maulei*, Japanese Quinces, are very pretty under glass, and little warmth is needful to expand the buds. The shrubs bristle with buds through winter, and even in January will open shyly at the risk of a pinch from frost.

Rhododendrons.—The pretty white starry *Spiraea Thunbergi*, and the graceful Guelder Rose, are familiar in shop windows early in the year and at the shows, but we should like to see the

Wistaria more grown for the greenhouse. Its soft mauvy colouring and the tender green of the opening leaves bring back sunny memories of pergolas and arches clustered over with garlands of blossom. It is the *Wistaria* so frequently seen against houses we mean, not the varieties of it or any other kinds. It is usually grown as a standard in the greenhouse, as then the racemes hang down gracefully from the slender stems.

HARDY ANNUALS.

One of the reasons people so often fail with hardy annuals is through not sowing them early enough. Another reason, and one far more prolific of harm, is the sowing the seed too thickly or too deeply, and not thinning out the young plants soon enough or sufficiently. Many people again do not think hardy annuals worth taking any trouble about, little knowing the exquisite display they, many of them, return for little pains bestowed.



H. Wanless.

SNOWY MEADOWS.

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A BOOK OF THE WEEK.

THE infrequency with which a modern dramatic poem contains anything that is suggestive or stimulating ought to ensure a welcome to Mr. Newman Howard's new work, *Savonarola, a City's Tragedy* (Dent). It deals with a period and with people full of attraction for imaginative writers. Learning, wickedness, materialism, and immorality seethed in Florence at the time of the Italian Renaissance. Under a profligate Pope and a priesthood where *liaisons* and other misdoings were unconcealed, religion had become a disregarded formula, though it was abundantly proved that the convictions from which its force is derived slept, but were not dead. On to this scene stepped Savonarola, one of those splendid characters who from time to time have appeared in the world's history, making no compromise with the flesh or Mammon, but grasping the highest standard of life and himself living up to it, righteous and a preacher of righteousness. He had few or no charms of person to recommend him. Physically he was unbeautiful, though the fact never seems to have been noticed by those who felt the ardour of his glance, and the love that animated every feature and won for him the hearts of little children. At first he was not even a great orator. Eloquence

grew out of his deep conviction. His history on a magnificent scale is that of the stoning of a prophet. The forces of evil prevailed against him, and eventually, after swaying the populace by dint of his sincerity and ardour, he was burned at the stake by the Florentines. In effect, the reason was that he was uncompromising. The half-prophet who will yield and palliate, and make friends with the Mammon of unrighteousness, is generally successful, as the world counts success; but the greater, who will not surrender a jot or tittle, usually, whether priest or poet, receives as guerdon the martyr's crown.

Such a career is indeed worthy of the writer's pen. In treating it Mr. Howard has followed with fidelity the historical facts, except that by the exercise of a poet's licence he has woven a love story in, or rather elaborated one. For historically it is true that young Girolamo fell in love with one of the Strozzi and was rejected by them as offering an unsuitable alliance. In the poem Laodamia Strozzi returns his passion, but, to save him from the assassin's knife, agrees to marry his rival Lapo, the arch-villain of the piece. Very skilful indeed in his opening act does our author suggest the philosophy and licence that

flourished together. Lapo is the philosopher, and we may quote a sample of his moralising for its brief sententiousness:

LAPPO.

"Sirs, I expound. De Volentia ac Potentia:
Concerning wills and weapons, powers and passions:
Behold one law of life is everywhere:
Power to the potent: let him rule who can.
Power is the quest of all: but how to win it?—
Even as your varlet, kneeling to your maid,
Becomes her master: as the holy father,
Servant of servants, is the lord of all;
As, corn in hand, a collier round his neck,
Your groom goes forth to catch his mare: even so,
De Volentia ac Potentia, note the rule:
You ride the passions and you win the power
Amico mio, if in the joke of life
You'd have the laugh your way, then learn this rule."

With him are two rakes, into the mouth of one of whom are put snatches of a song that, without needlessly offending the ultra-refinement of the twentieth century, suggests the ribaldry encouraged by Lorenzo de Medici. We bring the verses together for the sake of convenience:

"Hail to the merry merry month of May!
Flutter little linnets on the wild wood spray;
Titter little loves in the shadow of the trees:
'Nozza, 'Nozza is tripping in the leas,
And the red rose blooms in the month of May.

'Lips demure of the damsel say,
'Safe are the woods: come walk this way!'—
The roses blush for the young men lie
In wait for the wench: 'A kiss!' they cry,
'A kiss on the mouth in the month of May!'—

'Shadow and gloom and the pine woods grey:
'Come, oh Love!' and the lips say Nay!
'Come!' and the leaves and the lovers sigh,
And vow the love that will never never die,
Will never never die in the month of May!"

Into this scene where cynical philosopher and witty compaggnacci were displaying their theories and humour enters the young Savonarola full of the earnestness and enthusiasm of golden youth. Already he is touched with religious zeal, and it comes out in a fine passage of his love-making:

SAVONAROLA.

"So! He signifies
Consent: thereto Heaven urges him; for God—
God, who has made my soul a lonely harp
Hung in a windy place, where all the woes
Of Italy blow through and wail upon it,—
God wafted you, a White Bird, from His throne;
And, oh Laodamia, as in a dream,
I heard the seraphs of the City of God
Pealing their campanili, and crying aloud,
'Go forth, oh Savonarola: save the world!'—
Sanctum fecit me, et elegit ex omni carne.
This consecration is upon me; God
Gives thee to me as pledge."

The girl is as much in love as he is, and it is only in a spirit of self-sacrifice that she agrees to take the other; but Girolamo does not understand this, and betakes himself to a monastery, loving God all the more forasmuch as he thought the love of woman was denied him. The next act begins many years after the first, when he has passed this period of probation and emerges no longer a raw boy of promise only, but a man and a finished and steadfast preacher of the Word. The lady, although she went through the ceremony of marriage with her dastardly husband, wore a poniard in her bosom, and is maiden though married, her spouse having fled in terror and joined the French. He comes back as a kind of hanger-on and interpreter to the army of King Charles VIII. of France, whose mistress he vain would have made Laodamia. The scene is historic between Savonarola in which the preacher converts the King, and it is rendered here with great force and dignity. We cannot at the moment stay to describe and analyse the steps by which the fickle Florentines lost the love and confidence in Savonarola that this achievement inspired. The third act is devoted to that phase of the story. It opens with a sermon by Savonarola delivered in the cathedral. As he descends from the pulpit the following beautiful hymn is sung:

ALL.

"Son of Mary, Paraclete,
Sower of celestial wheat,
Stars in sky and love in clay,
Florence cries to thee to-day:
Viva Gesu, nostro re!"

VOICES OF 'THE CHILDREN OF THE KING.'

"Thou hast trod our pathway lowly,
Making thorns and blossoms holy:
Gesu at thy feet we lay
Palms of love to strew thy way.
Viva Gesu, nostro re!"

YOUNG MEN'S VOICES.

"When unholy shapes allure us
By thy sacred mount secure us;
Evil lies for us to slay,—
Go! of Battles, ours the fray.
Viva Gesu, nostro re."

GIRLS' VOICES.

"Cana fills our flasks with wine,—
Mingling marriage love with thine:
Orange flowers are thine array;
Trim our lamps to shine for aye!
Viva Gesu, nostro re."

DUET.

"Graves are footprints; there thy feet
Lit, and passing left them sweet:
Cypress blossoms into May:
Loved ones there in peace we lay.
Viva Gesu, nostro re."

ALL.

"Lo our ark is whelmed with grief.
Waft, O Dove, thine olive leaf:
Floods are rising, storms dismay:
Through the casement waft thy ray.
Viva Gesu, nostro re!"

"Foes surround us! Save us Lord!
Rise Jehovah! Bare thy sword!
Rise and hurl thy foes away!
Florence cries to Thee to-day:
Viva Gesu, nostro re!"

With ceaseless energy the author works out his sad and tragical plot, which, as everyone knows, ends with the victory of the Pope. The famous trial by fire between the Dominicans and the Franciscans is rendered in a lurid way that impresses on us as scarcely anything else could the state of politics and opinion in the Florence of that day. And later on we have glimpses of the cruel torture to which the monk was exposed. Here again the historical facts are strictly adhered to. Savonarola's mind wavers under the frightful physical pain, but his recantation is so wild and wandering it cannot be put down in words, while as soon as he recovers his mental balance he goes back to his old opinion. In the later scenes an eccentric is introduced who, we are told, is Michael Angelo the sculptor, and some fine passages are put into his mouth. One of these we quote:

"Sweet Echo, cities know thee, and the woods;
The shepherd sings thy name among the hills.
Thou callest answer from the lonely crags:
He scours the rock, he searches not his heart.
Vision and Voice, or dying Magdalen,—
Monks and Fantastics, we all go after thee:
Through flood and briar, through rack and cross we go:
To clasp our bride, the baffling Loveliness;
Whom, when they banish her from fane and wood,
We seek still quiring in the stars of God.
Signore, I am moved: make way; I quit you."

But of all the extracts it should be said that they suffer from not being read along with the context. Mr. Howard has avoided that grey monotone which is the note of so many modern dramatic poems, from those of Swinburne downwards. He keeps, as it were, all the passions going together. There is pathos and laughter, jest and scorn, enthusiasm and irony, all made audible in the same scene. In fact, the book is a fine attempt to represent not merely one side of life, but all life as it must have been in those singular days. Emphatically *Savonarola* is a book worthy the attention of all who care for promise and thoughtfulness in literature.

O'ER FIELD & FURROW.

NEARLY every Mastership is filled up, the latest news as I write being that Mr. Mowbray and Captain Reynard are taking over the Bedale from the Duke of Leeds, who has been a most popular Master. No one, of course, would dispute the Duke's reasons for resigning, but everyone feels that it is hard to give up a country when you have steered it through some difficult times, and might hope to see the good results of your work. However, the farmers, since they can no longer have the Duke of Leeds as their Master, are delighted with Mr. Mowbray. It is said, too, that there is to be a fresh staff at the kennels. Another Yorkshire pack, the Sinnington, a very ancient and famous Hunt, is to have a new Master, Lord Helmsley having consented to succeed Mr. Sherbrooke. Since the greater part of this Hunt is owned by the Earl of Feversham, this is an admirable arrangement. It is not so very long ago since the Sinnington was a trencher-fed pack. The hounds were collected the night before hunting in a kennel. Many of them needed no summons, and the older hounds were generally found gathered round the kennel door on the appointed days. After hunting was over they dropped off one by one, each to his respective home, till the huntsman and whipper-in were left alone. I have heard it said, however, that no hound ever left the pack till the day's work was over. Mr. Clayton Swan, afterwards Master of the Morpeth, was the first to kennel the hounds in 1891. The Sinnington is a country

which is not, as might be supposed, wholly a moorland country, but has some very pleasant scent-carrying vale, enclosed by fences that need a hunter to cross them. Lord Helmsley has had a good training in horsemanship at Oxford, where he played polo regularly, and at Melton for the last two seasons, where he has stayed with his stepfather, Mr. Hugh Owen, who knows as much about riding over Leicestershire as most people. Lady Helmsley is a daughter of Lady Warwick, and has had experience both over the grass of Leicestershire and the Essex ploughs; not but what Essex has some pleasant grass fields, too.

There is a certain novelty in riding over Exmoor with a fox. But it is enjoyable enough, and Mr. Marshall's last season in West Somerset has been marked by many good runs. Stout foxes and soil that carries a scent all lead to sport, and though I suppose few people associate West Somerset with fox-hunting at its best, yet those who know it best declare, and I believe with justice, that the average of sport is very good indeed. One quality the sportsman needs is patience, for foxes take some finding in a country where they may lie anywhere; so that it was not till long after midday that a bold fox jumped up in a patch of gorse. Woe to him, however, who drops behind or lets his attention wander in these wild countries. In a moment the fox may be afoot; hounds more often than not start close to the fox, and disappear with wonderful rapidity down some unexpectedcombe. A moment before, something of the lassitude which comes over a field when there is a long draw was to be seen, and then a holloa, a twang of the horn, and we were embarked in the interest and excitement of the chase. There was time given to redeem mistakes, for the fox turned back into the gorse, and then broke with the pack close to him. There are certain useful rules for riding over a wild country. One is to choose a good pilot and keep him in sight if you can, and the other is to leave a great deal to the horse. If over rough ground you try to steer a horse, the chances are that a difference of opinion brings you both to grief. By this time the great woods in front and the hill behind them dawned on one's mind as Haddon, those impenetrable coverts in which Sidney Tucker and the tufters spend so many hours every year. The hounds were somewhere, and their notes cheered us on as, riding by faith and not by sight, we scrambled up the steep incline, to find the pack working steadily on, noses down, sterns waving, in a widish and irregular circle back to the big woodlands again. Hounds were by this time out by themselves, and working well and with plenty of drive. As they were out of their country, the fox might have found an open earth, but perhaps he did not know where they were; at all events, hounds ran on, now in deep coverts, now again in the open. They hunted for two hours, and latterly the field had been obliged to push along to keep pace with them. Turning short now the fox was beaten, but at last hounds caught a view and the run was over. The hounds had earned their fox, and their huntsman was no doubt a happy man as he trotted home. Mr. Marshall was not out, but Mr. Hancock, well



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IN THE WOOD.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

you can see the fence firm, trim, and sturdy, and the traps you do not perceive till you have fallen over them. On the whole, I should give the palm to the man who rides over a well-fenced grass country, though, granted that he is well mounted, the latter is really the safer enterprise of the two.

The new Master of the Exmoor is Mr. Peter Ormrod, who has a pack of staghounds in the North, and brought a pack of old Southern hounds to hunt the red deer on Exmoor. But he found, as others have done, that hounds that can hunt the carted deer with success cannot always do as well with the wild stags.

The Quorn had quite the run of the week for the shires from John o' Gaunt last Friday. This little square covert is nearly as old as the Hunt, but, like Shangton Holt, Billesdon Coplow, Barkby Holt, and Glum Gorse, other coverts of historic fame, gave sport to our grandfathers, and will doubtless do the same for our grandchildren. John o' Gaunt foxes are very fond of the rough country which lies between that covert and Tilton Wood. I should be afraid to say how many times I have seen a pack hunting now fast, now slow, over nearly the line we went on Friday. That was one of the fast days (no sort of joke is intended), for hounds were close to their fox, and scent was, if not burning, yet always good enough to hold them to the line. Thus we had the sight of hounds hunting at a full pace and not dashing forward in snatches and then stopping altogether like harriers, but going on and on, until in consideration of the bad and treacherous going, especially on the tops of the hills, we could have forgiven them had they gone more slowly. The fox swung right and left now to avoid a lad at work, and again because a man shouted, but he held fairly to his original point, probably Tilton Wood. However, Brown's Wood stopped hounds, and bringing them to slower hunting gave the fox a chance of slipping into a convenient rabbit-hole, which, as he was beaten, was the wisest thing he could do.

N.

A TALE OF THE EAST.

IN the garden of a thousand white marble sculptured columns, surrounding the ruined palace of ancient Delhi, stands, and has stood for seven centuries, the beautiful pillar, crowned by a pagoda of beaten iron, known as the Kutub Minar. Inside, a winding staircase leads to the top, formerly 300ft. high, and round and about the pillar twines a broad band with an inscription worn quite away through lapse of time. Whence came the solid mass of iron that was fashioned for love of a beautiful woman into this lofty tower? Save in the land of the Rajah of Nahun in the Himalaya Mountains, there is no iron in India, and even there it is not of the fine quality chosen for the pillar's crown. Yet here at Delhi, 100 miles from Nahun, is this mystery of solid iron, weighing fifty tons, hammered into a bridal bower, and raised up into the clouds—an eyrie for an Afghan eagle's mate.

Seven hundred years ago, in the days of Mahommed Ghôsi, the Afghan, second great Mahommedan conqueror of India, the government of the country was given in his absence to



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HOMEWARDS.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

known to all stag-hunters, acted as Master, and saw, perhaps, more than anyone of this fine run.

Much about the same time the Quorn had found a fox and were hunting over the Hoby Vale. Of all delightful rides, that is the most charming, if—but it is a big if—you have a horse that will face the stiff fences. I have been asking myself which is the greater test of nerve—to ride boldly to hounds in a stiffly-fenced country, or over rough moorland. We know that falls in the open are more dangerous than legitimate tumbles over fences, but

Kutub-Ud-Din, an Afghan slave, who, when Ghôsi was assassinated, proclaimed himself Sultan of Delhi, and established the dominion known as the Afghan Slave Dynasty, which lasted nearly a century—1206 to 1288. Now the favourite wife of Kutub, a daughter of the Prince of Agra, was homesick for her father's palace there, and pined to see the gardens wherein she had played in childhood's days. She would sit and weep close to the borders of the river Jumna, flowing past her new home, the same river that bathed the steps of Agra's palace garden, and would send tearful messages by it, which, alas! it brought not back to her again.

"If I could but see it once more—my own dear home," she would say, "then would happiness be mine, O Kutub!" For she loved her husband as he loved her, only the longing for a sight of home came in betwixt her and the joy of life.

Wherefore Kutub, to whom she was dearer than life, said :

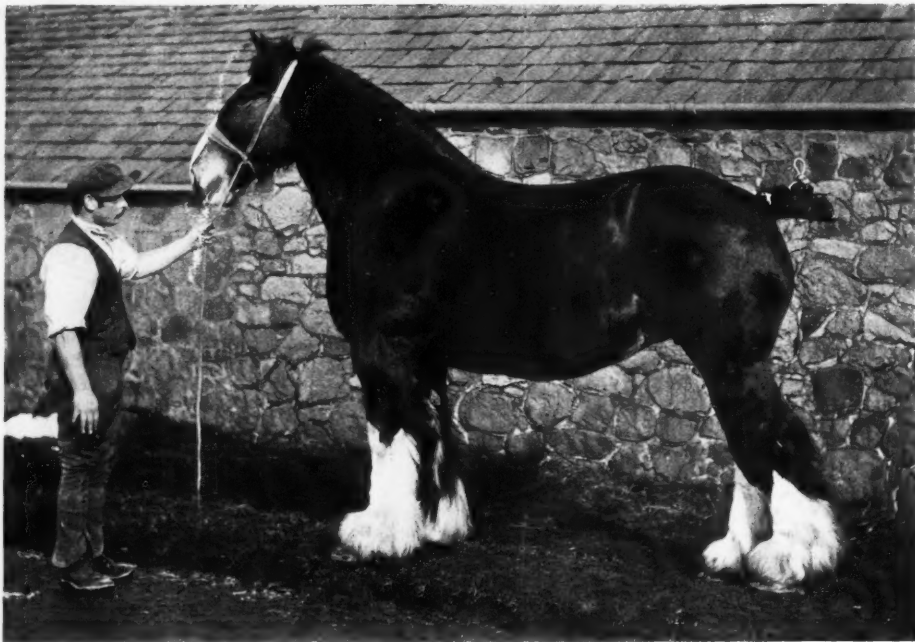
"The desire of thy heart shall be accomplished, little pearl." And he built a pillar with a tower on the top, where, every evening, before sunset, his wife would ascend, to spend the hours of sleep within view of her former home, not descending again until after sunrise to her husband's palace below. For at sunrise and sunset, during a few short moments, the palace at Agra, though eight miles distant from Delhi, was visible in the clear irradiated atmosphere from the iron tower, and Kutub's wife, gazing theretowards, soothed away the ache from her heart, gaining peace and comfort for the ensuing day.

Tradition says that "Minar" (a pillar) was the name of the lovely and beloved wife of King Kutub, and that the pillar is called after both of them, making indissoluble through the ages those who were so united in their brief sojourn on earth.

And to this day the glamour of a great love surrounds the story of the slave and the usurper, Kutub, King of Delhi.

LORD ROTHSCHILD'S YEAR.

LORD ROTHSCHILD deserves to be congratulated on the brilliance of his success in the first, and greatest, Shire horse show of the year. We do not know of anything that will compare exactly with it. Sir Alexander Henderson made a record when he secured the championship three years in succession, but he never scored so heavily at one exhibition. On this occasion the three great championship prizes all went to Tring, and the King, who was present while the judging took place, must have had his eye for horseflesh satisfied. First there was Girton Charmer, to whom was awarded the championship for the best of the younger stallions. He is a brown, by Mormaer of Batsford, and was bred by Mr. Fred Crisp. In a very strong class of three year olds, he had been "Eclipse first and the rest nowhere," a horse excelling so conspicuously in all desirable Shire points, such as size, weight, quality, action, and symmetry, that there could be no question in regard to his superiority over all competitors. Nor could the judges hesitate about giving him the championship; indeed, he had in his class already beaten his nearest rival, Mr. W. E. Green's Moor's Waggoner. In the contest between the older stallions the victory was not so immediate and unquestioned. Close critics



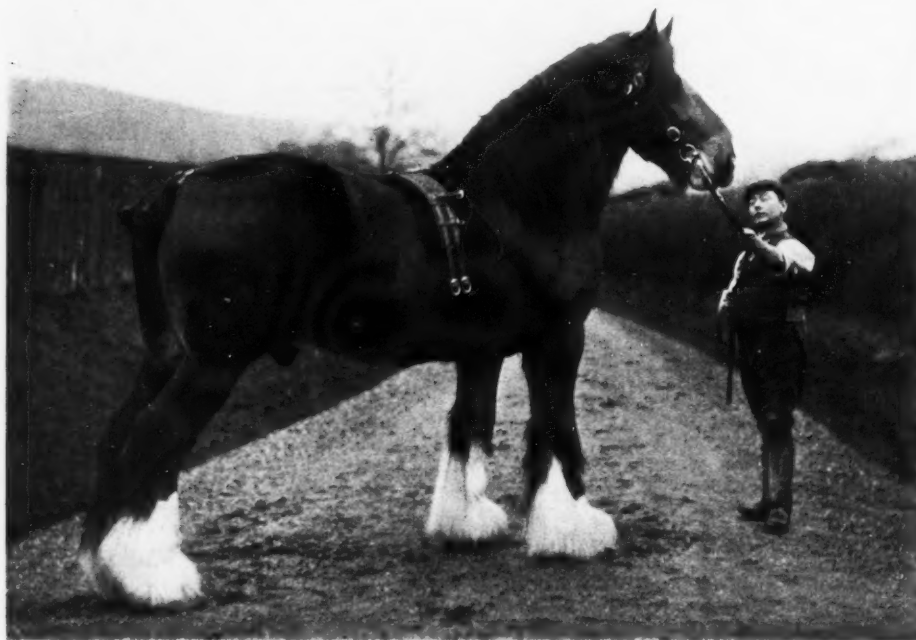
F. Babbage.

DESFORD COUNTESS.

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hold that Birdsall Menestral, splendid Shire though he is, has not attained the absolute perfection foretold for him last year, and for the championship of the show he had a formidable competitor in Mr. Stubbs's Blaisdon Conqueror, a stallion of which one of the judges had a very high opinion.

However, there can be no disputing the fact that the right thing was done when the rosette was handed over to Birdsall Menestral. In his class, that of four year old stallions, he had a difficult task to beat Tatton Friar, a brown bred by Lord Middleton and shown by Lord Egerton of Tatton. This is a stallion of exceptional merit, by Conquering Harold. The third great triumph of the Tring Stud was in the championship for fillies. In her class the winner had previously attracted attention by defeating Prospect, a weighty filly by Calwich Blend, shown by the King. Rickford Farewell is a bay by Barrow Advance, and was bred by Sir W. H. Wills. The fourth championship of the show, that for mares, was the only one Lord Rothschild did not take; it went to Messrs. Thompson for their Desford Countess. No success could possibly have been more popular than that of the Tring Stud. Lord Rothschild has done a great deal for the interests of English agriculture, and the continued popularity of the Shire is in large degree due to his influence and example. It is part of his luck to



F. Babbage.

BIRDSALL MENESTRAL.

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GIRTTON CHARMER.

have obtained the services of so competent an expert as Mr. Richardson Carr, who is well entitled to share this triumph.

But though the most prominent feature of the show was Lord Rothschild's success, it had many other interesting features. So popular is the breed that the number of exhibits is, as a matter of fact, only limited by the capacity of the hall at Islington. The quality also was up to a very high standard. More remarkable still is the fact that for once the veterinary surgeon did not find it necessary to order many rejections. The strictness of the examination in previous years is bearing fruit now. In no class were the rejections numerous, and in quite a number there was none at all. There is no need to dwell on the importance of this aspect of the matter. We have always to remember that the winners at the show, other things being equal, are likely to become the favourite breeding stock of the future, and it is of consequence that the Shire Horse Society should not set the seal of its approval on any animal that suffers from a constitutional defect. We do not write this without a lively feeling of sympathy with owners who have had their horses, as they think, needlessly thrown.

Among the prize-winners other than champions which we may describe as notable should be mentioned the excellent yearling with which Messrs. W. and J. Thompson carried off the first prize in their class—Tatton Monarch, the black two year old, son of Forest Chief, which won for Lord Egerton. The winner in stallions under 16h. 2in. was Messrs. Forshaw's well-known horse, Capstone Harold, and they were equally successful with Cœur de Lion in the class for big stallions. The prize for aged stallions went to Mr. Stubbs for that old-established favourite, Blaisdon Conqueror.

The sale following the show was a very successful one, though the prices realised were not quite so good as those for last year, the average being £79 19s. 11d., as compared with £81 4s. 4d. It should be noted that the yearling fillies brought much better prices, but there did not seem an equal demand for two year olds. Among the high prices realised, Mr. Warner Barrs got 216 guineas for his two year old Nailstone Claire, while one of Lord Bathurst's yearlings by Blaisdon Conqueror was sold for 200 guineas. The president of the society for next year is that highly successful breeder, Captain W. H. O. Duncombe, and at present it looks as though the society has a very long run of prosperity before it.

We have not said anything about the geldings, which were extremely good in all classes. This, in a sense, is the more practical side of Shire breeding, since the ultimate goal aimed at

is the production of horses for the hard work of street and farm. It is not as a breeder of animals that will take prizes that the ordinary farmer will find his best friend of labour, but as a purveyor of the useful draught horses that are in continual requirement. Indeed, a word should be said against the practice of turning into a stallion every pure-bred male; nineteen out of twenty of them are fit for nothing but to become geldings. And in these days the intelligent owner of mares will not consent to send them to the weedy sire thought good enough once.

ON THE GREEN.

JUST before I started for Biarritz the news came of poor "Bobby" Boreel's death, at a sadly premature age. In the first of the foursomes that was ever played between Biarritz and Pau, Mr. Boreel was our opponent representing Pau, in partnership with Mr. J. L. Low. Mr. Eric Hambro was my partner.

It was years ago. They played with great pluck against us, halving the first match after being seven or eight holes down. Then we played it all over again, and I think we just won, or it may be that they just did—I do not remember perfectly; at any rate, that was the beginning of all the annual matches for Lord Kilmaine's cup. Mr. Boreel showed that he was a plucky golfer then. Pluck always was one of the features of his game, and he was a good golfer as well as a plucky one when he was in form. There was never a player who understood better the value of giving the ball a chance at the hole. "Never up, never in," is a motto that a great many men hold in theory, but few practise its precepts as well as he did. He had other talents, too, besides the talent for golf—musical talents, excellent general ability,



F. Babbage.

RICKFORD FAREWELL.

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and, notably, the social talent. If he had had the occasion and the will to exercise them he would have gone far.

On my way to Biarritz I stopped to look at what is going to be the best golf links in France. It is at Le Touquet, fifteen miles south of Boulogne along the coast, among the fir trees and the sand-dunes. That is as much as to say that the soil is of the right kind of stuff, sandy, with real sand-bunkers and sand-hills. It is not opened yet for play, but all the greens are turfed and all the holes are cleared—that is to say that a fairway through the green is made to each of them. There are eighteen in all, of the full number, and if they were wanted there seems to be no reason why another eighteen, and several others after that, should not be added. But probably one lot of eighteen is enough for a start at all events. The start is to be made in May or June. It is an invidious thing to say, perhaps, that this is going to be the best links in France. Pau, perhaps, may resent it. But Pau, though it gives a good test of golf, is inland golf, after all; and so, too, is La Boulie, the green near Paris. Biarritz, perhaps, may let the statement

go without resentment, for although Biarritz golf is excellently amusing, with several rather unique features, such as driving up cliffs and driving down cliffs, with all kinds of adventures on the seaside and the *chambre d'amour*, name of horrid irony, still, it hardly will claim to be called first-class. Although beside the sea, the green is not "seaside" in the golfer's sense, of having the real "links" soil. They had this at Dinard, and at the same time the best links then in France, but now the villa builder has exploited for his own base uses all that fine soil that ought to have been kept sacred for golf. At Dinard France missed her opportunity, she will not do so at La Touquet, for the soil is firmly held for golfing purposes—so much of it, that is to say, as is needed for that noble object.

It is curious that, so far as one hears, none of the native French amateurs is reaching a very high standard in golf. This is the more curious because some of the French professional players are very good indeed. There is Massey, the Biarritz professional, who had quite a chance of winning the open championship a year or two ago; there is Dominique at Pau, and there are many more who would take a high place in the best company; but among the amateurs there does not seem to be one of whom the same may be said. Probably golf has not yet become popular enough in France to attract a sufficiently large number of young players to make it likely, on the calculation of chances, that an extra good player would be evolved. On the other hand, there may be many possible amateur champions of the French blooming and golfing unseen by the eye of the world. At La Boulicie they have an open championship (open, that is to say, to all amateurs) arranged for about the time of the Grand Prix. It is possible that this event may have the effect of bringing into evidence some French lights that have been under bushels. It may be, however, that the conscription interferes a good deal with a whole-souled devotion to golf, or to other games and sports, in which case there is not much chance for compulsory service in Great Britain with a Cabinet constituted on good golfing lines, as is the present.

The University teams seem to be suffering some severe hammerings from the clubs that they are meeting in practice matches, but these clubs have put very good sides against them, and neither University has come out very distinctly better than the other; so that these preliminary canterers do not give much indication of what will happen when the two seats of learning meet. Cambridge appears to have a very good man in Mr. Macdonald (if that is not the correct spelling I apologise—I am not sure). Mr. Humphreys, for Oxford against Sunningdale, did wonderfully well in beating Mr. Osmund

Scott by six holes, or some such large number, but Mr. Scott was very short of practice, and against this, in estimating what Mr. Humphreys is worth, should be set a heavy defeat that he had at Mr. Darwin's hands at Woking. When the clubs meet the Universities now there seems a large element of the graduate about most of the club teams opposing the undergraduates, so this is pleasant for both sides. The graduates may renew their youth in recalling the delights of the schools and the beautiful lies of the Hinksey and the Gog-Magog links, and for the undergraduate it is good to see that the taking of a degree need not necessarily interfere with the higher culture of golf.

HORACE HUTCHINSON.

TWO HOCKEY MATCHES.

THE men's game of hockey of which we show illustrations was that between Oxford and Cambridge, in which Oxford succeeded in defeating the sister University. It leaves each side with a total win of six matches, while three have been drawn; so that the contest next

year should possess even more than the usual amount of interest. The sides were fairly well matched, and the game was extremely interesting to watch, although neither side played quite so well as had been expected. On both sides the defence was much better than the attack, but the backs showed a tendency to hit too hard, and therefore did not play quite into the hands of the forwards. For Cambridge Mr. V. H. Maccaw distinguished himself, and played finely with Mr. L. G. Colbeck. The forwards

did not play very well together, and the short passing game was rather weak on both sides, though Oxford was rather better than her rival in combination. At the beginning, and for some time after the bully off, Cambridge held the attack, but they failed to reach the circle. Eventually Oxford won by a single goal to none, so that as between the team there was not much in it.



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TAKING A ROLL IN.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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OXFORD V. CAMBRIDGE: PLAY IN MID-FIELD.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

Our purpose in illustrating the other match—that of the Surrey Ladies against the Hertfordshire Ladies—is meant rather as a protest against the way in which hockey clubs for women are neglected. Newspapers, which are only too glad to pay attention to the play of the men, carefully omit to say anything about the doings of the women. Now this is not quite fair, and is in reality the survival of the old prejudice that women cannot really play any outdoor pastime well. Hockey is one of the few games in which they distinguish themselves. They play it with great heart and enthusiasm, and during the last few years hockey clubs for women have been established in nearly every part of the kingdom, but it is no secret that the secretaries have had a difficult task to perform. While a men's club is helped by every possible form of publicity, that of the women is systematically ignored both by the leading daily papers and the weekly journals which profess to devote themselves to sport. Of course, this does not hold true of certain newspapers which are written solely from the woman's point of view, but then they are not so generally read as the others. It is true there are old-fashioned people who still nourish a certain objection to girls playing



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JUST SAVED.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

not strong enough and rough enough to play it well, and so it too went the way of cricket. Finally, came two games in which women have learned to excel. One, strangely enough, is golf, though at first a woman on the golf course was known to all old parliamentary hands as one of the greatest nuisances ever invented. The canny old Scotch players looked with a jealous eye at the intrusion of petticoats into their ancient mystery, so in their shrewd practical way they made little courses for their exclusive use, where the holes were somewhat further apart than the loops in croquet, so that the fashionable lady could knock a ball from one to another without loss of dignity. But the schoolgirl, or rather girls just after they left school, came along and took the matter up more seriously. They began to play not for the sake of appearance, or because they wanted to get into a man's game, but purely from the enjoyment which they found it yielded; and those who have watched Miss Rhona Adair, or Miss May Hezlett, know what the result has been. In a similar spirit they took up hockey, and began playing it with great zeal and enthusiasm, so that nowadays it is



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ROUND THE OXFORD GOAL.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

a game like hockey. They say it is too rough for them; and one has to admit that the tradition of the game tends to roughness. Its origin seems to have been that of a game which is sometimes played in out-of-the-way places under the name of shinty, so-called, it has been said, because one of the points was to whack at your opponent's shins. It was played with home-made clubs or large sticks, and is still one of those annual ball pastimes played on certain days in some of the Scottish towns. Only within comparatively recent years has the rough-and-tumble shinty been organised into the modern hockey, with its elaborate rules, its beautiful sticks, and other adjuncts of a popular game. One would have thought it really one of the last games to be taken up enthusiastically by girls. They tried cricket for a time, but cricket as expounded by them proved to be a futile and silly amusement. Women cricketers are generally admitted to have been a failure. Then they turned their attention to football, but with no better result. Here again you have a game which is ill-suited to maiden limbs. Yet it football is not played with go and vigour, it degenerates into about the poorest game imaginable. The women were

very common to see girls playing quite as prettily, if not altogether as strongly, as men. And the one great advantage of this is that for the time being they forget all about sex, forget it as completely as a woman does when she is answering an examination paper. That, we are convinced, is one



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SURREY v. HERTS: TAKING A ROLL IN.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

of the greatest blessings that a game can bring with it. The great objection to confining a young woman to house amusements is that they end in flirtation; that is to say, that the girl becomes conscious of her sex. Now far be it from us to insinuate that a woman should not be womanly, or that when the due time comes she ought to ignore her sex; but health, both of body and mind, will inevitably be gained by every amusement that brings temporary forgetfulness that any difference between men and women exists. The young girl who can throw her heart into an outdoor game will be all the better for it later on in life. For this reason, if for no other, hockey, golf, and kindred pastimes of the open air for girls deserve the fullest and frankest encouragement, instead of being denied notice in the leading papers. One would have thought that prejudice in the matter would have died a natural death long ago, but the extent to which it survives is amazing.

MRS. JACKSON'S PERVERSION.

"YES," said Jackson, as we took a noonday chop together at one of the bright little tables of the Amateur Club, "I do think we may say that we've done it. Partly through luck, but mostly through her extraordinary taste—"

"Assisted by her spouse's eye for *ensemble*—"

"Oh, that's nothing to the eye she brought to the business—I really believe that we make as good a show in the way of a charming little house, inside and out, as could be done for the money, or even a bit more. Luck, over and over again, as I tell you; but that would not have gone far without her fine



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HERTS CENTRE FORWARD GETS AWAY.

"C.L."

marble rim of what was once a fountain, I take it; but now, seven feet across, the boundary of what you might call a bun-shaped garden-bed, crowded with daffodils and tulips. Don't you see that bevy of gay young things against the dark verdure of the hundred year old yew?"

"I do; and Dutch William with his beak at the commercial-note window-panes as he murmurs to himself, 'Now, this is the sort of thing!'"

"Just what that monarch of pious and immortal memory would have said. Well, and within the room a half-panelling of chestnut beneath celadon (panelling original), a lovely carved old mantel-piece in low relief that we bought out of a tumble-down Georgian house in Stoke Newington, and an old print or two, and, by way of living glow from the walls, my bindings that you know something of. Yes, and—but there, if I weren't talking to an old friend, which him and me was puppies together, I should begin to fancy myself bragging a bit."

"It is nothing of the kind, my dear Jackson. I know what it is."

"Yes, you do. And you used to know Lucy almost as well



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HOCKEY: SURREY PASSING.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

perception of the fitting and harmonious. But you'll come and see us, won't you?"

Certainly I would, and gladly.

"Make it a Saturday or Sunday. I don't know how it is, but there's no time for seeing an interior like the shining hours of Saturday or Sunday. Lucy will be so glad to see you again, in her new estate of house'life."

I (quite conscientiously) knew she would.

"Of course you won't expect anything but quite a small place, you know. The little snuggerly that we are most sweet upon, but especially myself, isn't very much smaller than the largest room in the house. Twenty-one by seventeen; window—with leaded panes the size of commercial notepaper, you understand—framed in the length of the room, and looking into what you wouldn't call a bit of garden so much as a green court; a small green court hedged on all sides with wall-cut yew eight feet high—pleached and flat and flawless, by George! as never you did see. Well, and in the middle of this close, and rising little more than a foot above the grass, the beautiful

as I did at one time. Still in the schoolroom was she? Well, then, that is another reason for your coming. You come and be surprised."

Thereupon Jackson went off: had heard of a little dealer who really thought that he had got hold of an unrecorded bit of Hogarth—an English rose of a girl reading a penny ballad. Jackson: hard upon forty, and yet as young at heart, and eke in mind for all its cultivation, as the graceful young woman of five-and-twenty whom he had married not long before. The very next Saturday was all that Jackson could ask; and therefore, in fine still air and gilding sunshine, I bowled down to Wolsey Lodge—the name telling something of its whereabouts, perhaps.

And it was just as Jackson had said. Through a tall iron gate, simply but beautifully wrought though it opened on a forecourt little more than 20ft. deep, and so into a hall that you might scarcely turn a sedan-chair in, and yet with a distinction and an air of space which could not have been imparted by its dimensions. Thence, preceded by a little bent old butler, with

an invaluable look of being rather deaf, into the very room that Jackson had found so much pleasure in describing. Giving rein to fancy, I had pictured from his bits of detail an entirety of (as I thought) unattainable charm; but it was precisely in charm that the reality exceeded it. "What a place to work in—if one happened to be a gentle seventeenth century sort of poet!" was the thought in my mind at the first step over the threshold. "Why in this beautiful tranquillity—" and then I had a vision of George Herbert writing "Sweet day, so cool, so calm, so bright," by the window that looked into the garden court.

Mrs. Jackson was not at home. Jackson came in when I had had three minutes to look about me in a harmony where every particular thing refused to be distinguished, but instantly shifted attention from itself to something else which did likewise. I was delighted. Jackson was delighted. He took me to the dining-room; perfect in its way, everything in it having caught a certain resemblance to the old butler in polished ancients and in looking rather deaf; which is just what everything in a dining-room should look. Then to the drawing-room, where was a surprise almost as delightful, though it went not so deep as the first. This room was in an old French way, as the other was entirely English, and you could not say while you were in it that it was less charming for its purpose. So it seemed when its living occupants were only a couple of men—an evident and grave detraction. Therefore, to view the room properly, I called on imagination to place Mrs. Jackson's beautiful old mother in a chair that commanded a view toward the river, and then bring in Mrs. Jackson herself to see how the dear old lady was getting on. The fancy answered to perfection.

And at that moment in came Mrs. Jackson—a tall and handsome woman beyond my expectation, and in her eyes all the bright intelligence that Jackson had rather more than hinted at. She was kind, cordial, said the right things with a latent promise in them that she could do better on closer acquaintance; so that again I glanced about me to gather what emphasis her presence might give to the beautiful room she stood in. There seemed to be none; no difference for the better, but, as the minutes glided by, rather a difference for the worse. A quite discernible difference for the worse; which was so puzzling to my engaged thought that I fear I may have loosed an enquiring glance, here and there, in which there was something noticeable. For meeting Jackson's eye, on what, no doubt, was one of these excursions, vision encountered in it a look of embarrassment touched with vexation which had to be accounted for somehow. But "Go and take your hat off, Lucy, and give us some tea downstairs," he said as the look vanished. And away she went, singing to herself from the door outward, while we in silence returned to the bookroom.

Mrs. Jackson was a long time in taking her hat off. The days were still short. Dusk seemed to gather early in that quaint little court outside, and with the falling of its first shades Jackson had the curtains drawn. The air being chill before sundown, a coal fire added to the candle-light brightness as well as warmth, and the soft glow of the combination, the snugness and intimacy into which it brought Jackson's furnishings and garnishings, gave them another and even a greater charm; though not till Joseph brought in the tray was the last touch added. The late Mr. Horsley painted such interiors, but not, I think, any that made so contenting a picture. Two or three minutes after Joseph had put the finish to it as a habitable room as well as beautiful Mrs. Jackson entered.

Mrs. Jackson entered, with results as before. A complete change of atmosphere, and the cause obvious enough now. Having taken off her hat and coat, Mrs. Jackson had (presumably) thrown off her walking-dress for what is properly described, I believe, as a "confection," and no doubt one of those which are almost as often called "adorable." The removal of the hat fully revealed an equally adorable coiffure. By some process which entirely baffles conjecture, a weak or badly-fitting addition to the vertebral column seemed to have been inserted in the lady's neck, while her figure in all its visible lines had undergone a distortion even more incomprehensible than the apparent elongation of her throat. Considered as a gown, the confection, with its tags and rags protuberant on the upper part and the eccentric contours of the lower, was little less than an outrage upon every conception of grace. The coiffure, with its huge outstanding tufts, seemed to have been taken from one of those books of African travel with vignettes representing "a typical woman of Assombampa" and other tribes; while as for Mrs. Jackson's naturally straight and firm upstanding figure—topped with barbarism and continued in a speaking style of decadence, it resembled a long, narrow, ill-constructed letter S. That being so, had Mrs. Jackson kept to her chair more constantly it would not have been so bad; but whether from necessity or preference (it *must* have been necessity, I think) she chose to make the most of her strange distortions by standing at the old mantel-piece from Stoke Newington or moving about the room.

Of course, so much of inexpressibly aggressive ugliness spoiled all. And how it should be possible that a handsome, elegant, well-bred young woman, in no matter what surroundings—!

Poor Jackson! I knew now the secret of that vexed and embarrassed eye, being almost as embarrassed and vexed myself. This was the sure taste, this the fine perception of the fitting and harmonious, in willing subjugation to the Mode! It was a less painful spectacle in the dining-room, at table, but (that I should write it!) Mrs. Jackson's attire was least displeasing at the moment of her disappearance for the brief remainder of the evening.

The door closed, and in five minutes things were themselves again, or would have been but for Jackson's fallen face.

"Isn't it a pity?" he said, looking down upon his shoes.

"Oh, well; we can understand."

"But it is so abominably ugly in itself. And to think of the sacrifice of natural grace and beauty, not to speak of the unsettlement of ideas which we all love to cherish where our own dear women are concerned."

"But perhaps Mrs. Jackson . . . perhaps you . . . have you ever—? But no. I suppose it is too difficult to drop a hint."

"If you mean a hint of displeasure, you would know if you had a wife, and your relations with her were what *ours* are, that the thing is impossible. You might as soon draw a knife."

"And there are no delicate indirect ways of suggestion?"

"Of course there are; but they are of no use. The last thing I did was to get a copy of Augustin Challamel's book on the history of fashion in France, with its splendid plates in colours, representing the change of costume down from the Gallo-Roman time to about twenty years ago. You know the book?—there it is. It lay about on the tables here for a month. Leaning on my shoulder, she looked over the plates with me one evening with the greatest interest and curiosity. Now, you know, from the days of Charlemagne to Louis Napoleon's there were some absurd extravagant fashions, as well as some extremely beautiful that might be adapted without seeming strange to-day. But in all the lot there is not one—and I mean to include the style when they wore cow-horns at the sides of their heads—not one so barbarically ugly as the get-up you have just seen Lucy in. Now I *did* just point that out in a playful touch-and-go way. But what was the use? or what the use of her eyes? or the use of that fine, fine taste which I declare to you she has in a very high degree? . . . But come along! Let us get out of this! I've got a den of the regular old sort next door to where they put the coals, and a box or two of weeds big and good."

With hanging heads we went.

F. G.

CORRESPONDENCE.

BATS IN CHURCH.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I am writing to know if in the columns of your paper, COUNTRY LIFE, you will kindly tell me how to get rid of bats in a church. Some time ago there was a suggestion as to fuming them out of barns, but this method is hardly practicable in a church. For one thing, it is a large abbey church, not a tiny village church; and, again, the fumes of sulphur would be deleterious to the fine brasses and embroidered hangings in the church. The bats are a perfect plague, coming out, as they do, during divine service on Sunday evenings. Is there any way of getting rid of them before they again multiply this spring? The nests are quite out of reach unless scaffolding be employed, which is a costly business for such a cause; neither can shooting be had recourse to, on account of splintering beams and doing other damage. Is it possible to attract the bats to food previously poisoned, and, if so, what kind of food would be readily eaten by them and what poison most effective? I may add, there are not, I think, a hopeless number of these creatures at present, but they are very large in size, and cause dirt and destruction. They were never noticeable before last year. The church, though old, has been completely restored and entirely reroofed in the past eight years. Finally, will any strong perfume or scent keep them from flying against and settling on individuals?—T. C. S. ANDREWS, Bourne, Lincolnshire.

[Probably the reroofing of the church eight years ago created convenient sleeping quarters for the bats, and since then they have been multiplying. It is possible that some of the insecticides used for fumigating glass-houses might effectively drive out or kill the bats without injuring the brasses, etc. Experiments in a small greenhouse would show this. As bats only take live insects, poison cannot be used; but if the holes whence they enter the interior of the building are not numerous, might these not be reached without costly scaffolding, and close-meshed wire-netting be placed over them? As flying against and settling on individuals must always be a most involuntary performance on the part of the bats, it is doubtful whether any scent would prevent such accidents.—ED.]

SUBMERGED RIVER CHANNELS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The very interesting communications which you have published in regard to the new theory of salmon migration disposed me to turn to some notes I have by me in respect to submerged river-beds. Some of these, resulting from the investigations of well-known geologists, are so remarkable that they may be of interest to some of your readers who have not seen the papers in which they appeared. These papers are for the most part of a technical character, but, without going into technicalities,

a brief outline may be given of the conclusions at which their writers have arrived. They are chiefly connected with the old course of the Rhine. Mr. F. W. Harmer, F.G.S., who for many years has devoted himself to the study of the geology of East Anglia and of Holland and Belgium, considers that the presence in the pliocene beds of East Anglia of certain mineral substances of a like character to some met with in the Rhenish drifts of Holland, indicates that at the time of the deposit of the Waltonian crag and other later beds of the pliocene, Great Britain was connected with the Continent, and the channel of a large river, probably the Rhine, extended from the neighbourhood of the present Hook of Holland to Walton in Essex, where it turned northward and traversed East Anglia, at one time crossing the district now represented by the valleys of Broadland, and afterwards, during the forest-bed period, taking a course further eastward. (The forest-bed deposits of East Anglia are estuarine and fresh-water deposits, remarkable for containing the trunks of trees, the seeds and leaves of plants, and a profusion of fragmentary mammalian remains, some of which represent extinct species, such as the sabre-toothed tiger, cave bear, straight-tusked elephant, etc.) In Mr. Harmer's own words: "During the period represented by the estuarine deposits of the forest bed, the Rhine seems to have swung round in a great bend from Kessingland to Cromer, following, more or less, the present trend of the coast." The fact of the general character of the mammalian fauna of the forest bed being distinctly southern, and of its being represented by isolated and often fragmentary bones and teeth, points, he adds, to these remains being those of the fauna of "some part of the Rhine valley towards the south, rather than that of East Anglia," and he suggests, as a possible explanation of their presence in the forest bed, that they may be those of herds of animals which were overtaken, while browsing on the low grounds bordering the river, by sudden and violent floods. This would account for the fragmentary state in which they are found, and also for the broken tree trunks and the indications they retain of having been drifted. Mr. Harmer is content with tracing the old course of the Rhine as far as Norfolk. Cavaliere W. P. Jervis, the curator of the Royal Italian Industrial Museum at Turin, suggests, in a paper read before the Victoria Institute, that it may be traced much further. Thirty-three miles north-west of Cromer, and about fifteen miles east of Grimsby, there exists in the bed of the North Sea a "distinctly marked, tortuous, submerged river valley, twenty-three miles long by two miles broad, running towards the north." It is known to the North Sea fishermen as the Silver Pits, and Cavaliere Jervis is of the opinion that it formed a part of the course of the Rhine—or, as he calls it, the Palæorhine. That the rest of the submerged channel of the river should have become obliterated, he thinks not at all strange, "seeing that it ran principally through tertiary strata with low banks." The Silver Pits, he suggests, may mark the river's passage through chalk rocks. Nor is he content with this. The soundings of the North Sea, he believes, enable him to trace the Palæorhine northward as far as the Orkney and Shetland Isles, between which there is a deep-water channel that was also, in all probability, a part of the river, which finally entered the Atlantic about fifty miles west of Shetland. This means that the Rhine was formerly about double its present length; and Cavaliere Jervis looks upon the Scheldt, Thames, Humber, Forth, and Tay as being portions of its old tributaries. I may add that Mr. Harmer's papers contain some exceedingly interesting notes on the flora of the land which formerly connected England with the Continent, and also on the remarkable wild life of these now submerged tracks in the days when the Rhine was an English river.

—WILLIAM A. DUTT.

A CINQUE PORT.

[TO THE EDITOR.]

SIR,—I am enclosing a photograph that you may perhaps like to use as a



supplement to the illustrations of Rye which appeared in a recent issue. It represents the land-gate of one of the three places of strength built to defend the town, when it was of more military importance than it is to-day.—F. P.

AN OLD MOLE-CATCHER.

[TO THE EDITOR COUNTRY LIFE.]

SIR,—In your issue dated February 20th you mention the "old mole-catcher as a rare animal now." I venture, therefore, to send for your consideration a portrait of one who haunts this locality. The farmers pay him so much a year to rid them of the "mowdy rats," the local name, and you meet him on his rounds in isolated places. He usually has some hardly dead moles in his hands or pockets, which he shows you. He has others, their hind-quarters hanging writhing in the traps. He is terse in manner, his knitted brows usually studying the ground, and his unerring eye detects tracks which no one else can see. He is strong, a six-footer, and walks his many miles with a long swinging stride. He allowed me to take his picture. He has been at it for many years, thirty at least, and reckons his average is 100 a week, making a surprising total of some 160,000. Lots of fine ladies now get skins from him by the hundred or thousand. A motor-cape takes from 700 to 1,200. He gets

fivepence a skin from old customers; but skins are increasing in value.

—M. S.

PRIMITIVE FIREPLACES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In previous numbers of COUNTRY LIFE you reproduced some photographs of quaint Orkney fireplaces, and I now send you another one which I have since taken.

The hearth is supported by a "back" of masonry about 4ft. high. There is no conduit for the smoke to the "lum," or exit on the ridge of the roof, with the consequence that the couples, "t wart-balks," etc., are blackened and festooned with soot—the accumulation of years. In one fireplace the lum was not directly above it, but several feet to one side, the object of this being to prevent the fire being



extinguished in rainy weather. In another example the lum was immediately above the hearth, and had a movable board or cowl on the outside, which was manipulated, according to the direction of the wind, by a dependent pole. The lower end of the pole came to within 3ft. of the back of the hearth, and I was amused to see the domestic cat springing up along it with agility and passing out through the lum. Peats, ashes, dust, and a conglomeration of household articles and furniture, from churns to box-beds, crowded these small houses, and hot sulphurous wreaths of peat-reek, unable to find exit, made the air stifling. Locally, it passes as a proverb that these old-fashioned farmhouses are healthy and conducive to longevity, but I think these desirable attributes exist in spite of, rather than on account of, the primitive conditions of living, outdoor occupation and plain food contributing more to good physique, and counteracting any evil caused by ill-ventilated dwellings.—T. K.

ANIMAL SURGERY.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I think that the following fact may interest some of your readers, especially those who have read Mr. Long's books, one of which deals with animal surgery. A redshank, which was with some other "waders" in an aviary containing a pond, wounded itself on the top of the head. Unfortunately the bird died, but on inspection it was found that it had plastered the wound over with mud. This example of a bird's instinct for self-preservation is very striking, and I believe that for a bird to doctor its head is most unusual, although snipe and woodcock have been known to heal broken legs by coating the fractured parts with clay which became hard. I should be very glad if you could find space to record this in your columns, because it is certainly worth notice.—G. V. NEGUS, Rugby.